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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
WAR AIMS AND COMPROMISE PEACE
IN BRITISH POLICY 1914-1916

by



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A THESIS
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "War Aims and Compromise Peace in British Policy 1914-1916" submitted by Kenneth Richardson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The questions of compromise peace and war aims in British policy during the First World War need to be considered in relation to the broad forces in foreign policy and Imperial expansion before the war. British policy and British expansion during the war should be merged with pre-war developments. Forces of Imperial expansion had long existed and had led to specific conflicts with France, Russian and Germany. It was, however, the threat of domination of the Continent by Germany rather than such specific conflict that led Britain to lean towards France and Russia in the pre-war diplomacy. Specifically, this threat, combined with the threat involved in the increase in German naval power, made her side with France in the disputes over Morocco in 1905-1906 and 1911. In these disputes the main concern was to avoid a diplomatic defeat of France by Germany, for such a German victory would in itself mean admission of German superiority and hence German hegemony in Europe.

British policy of intervention in the war was but an extension of this policy of maintaining France, and as was the case in the diplomatic confrontations the prevention of German victory was an end in itself. Indeed, because the coming of the war and its early developments gave evidence of both the strength of Germany and, it seemed, her deliberate intention of aggression and domination, it was felt that merely to check Germany was not

sufficient; to prevent German domination of the Continent a decisive Allied victory was required. This concern for defeat of Germany, and the extreme German hostility against England caused by her support for France and Russia, made Britain very dependent upon her Allies, and it was essential to avoid any breach with them.

The development of British war aims in 1914-1916 was largely a function of these broad aims in British policy -- to defeat Germany and preserve the alliance. Britain had to co-ordinate her policy on the eventual settlement in Europe with the aims of her Allies and, where the need to defend her Imperial position and her control of the seas led to extension of control into German and Turkish territory she had to come to agreement with her allies as regards the division of conquered areas. Though there were economic and political forces of expansion, these had long existed, and it should not be assumed they were causes of the coming of the war or of its continuation in 1914-1916.

American attempts at mediation, based on the idea of a "peace without victory", reached through negotiations over specific issues, were thus doomed to failure unless accompanied by the threat of withdrawal of American financial and industrial support of the British war effort. Only belief that Victory was not possible could have led Britain to abandon her policy of Victory, and the faith in ultimate triumph survived the incipient doubt of late 1916.

"Beware
Of a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee."

-- Shakespear, Hamlet

"Fighting is a sort of incident in the struggle
to keep their world from German domination.
. . . ."

W.H. Page, September, 1914

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CHAPTER I: FORCES OF WAR

"As regards Germany, we have burned our boats. We have chosen our side and must abide by the result."

A.J. Balfour, 4 August, 1914¹

In the decade before the outbreak of the First World War it was not conflict over specific issues that led Britain to choose sides and become part of an anti-German power grouping. Nor was it such conflict in 1914 that led her to choose sides more firmly -- to "burn her boats" as regards Germany. Behind both these decisions lay a broad security consideration -- the need to prevent an apparently aggressive Germany from establishing hegemony on the Continent. And once the war had begun and Britain had joined in a fray of which the initial object was only the vague goal of Victory, the termination of the war was seen not as a matter of bargaining over disputed issues or overlapping war aims, but of defeating the German forces. By killing the will to war in Germany and by ensuring the superiority of the British position in the European power situation, the war was to bring about firm security for the future.

When hostilities began on the Continent in 1914 there was a large degree of freedom left to the British Cabinet. As Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, commented to Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador, on 29 July, "We were free from engagements,

and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do."² The final burning of boats was not carried out until the Cabinet meeting of 4 August when the sending of an "ultimatum" to Germany concerning Belgian neutrality was agreed upon.³ But there had been a certain choosing of sides long before this. "There is no doubt whatsoever," wrote Sir Arthur Nicolson, Permanent Under-secretary in the Foreign Office, on 28 July, "that were we drawn into this conflagration we should be on the side of our friends." Though the British Government were unable to give at this time a definite understanding as to what the British attitude would be, "there is very little doubt, supposing we were called to take a share, that we should not hesitate to do our duty."⁴ The fact that such terms as "friends" and "duty" were used was indicative of this earlier choosing and showed the subtle element of moral compulsion which it had created.

Not everyone, indeed, agreed with the views expressed by Nicolson as to the call of friendship and duty. When Grey spoke in the Commons on the war question on 3 August and referred to the long period of friendly relations with France, one backbench member called out that there had also been friendly relations with Germany.⁵ This situation reflected the general scene in British politics, where there were political forces -- mainly in the Radical,

pacifist sector -- which had opposed the tendency of British policy to side with France against Germany and in the European crisis of 1914 argued against the idea that this policy of special friendship with France should draw Britain into the war. The backbencher's comment also reflected to some extent the international scene, for there was a degree of truth in his assertion: before the decision for intervention there was nothing absolute about the choice that had been made. Earlier, when France and Russia were seen as the Powers with which Britain was most likely to go to war, Lord Salisbury had described the British position as one of leaning towards the Triple Alliance without belonging to it; the same description could be applied roughly to the British position respecting the Franco-Russian alliance before the war.⁶

Such "leaning" -- as Grey pointed out to the German Ambassador -- was not necessarily incompatible with an attempt to maintain friendly relations with the other side.⁷ As in international politics in general, there were two aspects to British diplomacy -- on one hand, defence, and on the other, settlement of conflict. The existence of conflict, including that potential Anglo-German conflict created ipso facto by German power, necessitated the defensive aspect of foreign policy and compromise of the freedom of isolation. As a prominent

Unionist politician pointed out to a colleague in 1914, after reviewing comprehensively the faults of all his political associates, "with some one we must cooperate."⁸ In the international sphere it was equally obvious that association was a basic ingredient in the recipe of power and that power was necessary for the protection of interests, such as the basic interest of national security. There was indeed a certain "splendour" in isolation. But as Lord Lansdowne had emphasised in the House of Lords in February of 1902, when defending the decision for a binding alliance with Japan, there was also definite danger -- unless of course the isolated power were a match for a combination of all the others.⁹ Otherwise, in Bismarck's phrase, the secret was to be à trois in a situation of five Great Powers. The threat that Germany was to become à quatre was particularly disturbing to most Englishmen who gave serious thought to the defence aspect of foreign policy. But the decision to choose sides was the lesser of two evils where the ideal was not considered possible. Grey felt that a general or ultimate aim of British policy was that there should be no groups at all.¹⁰ But there were groups, and as the threat from Germany came to be viewed as greater than that from France and Russia, it made sense to lean towards those Powers. Yet the degree of leaning always depended upon the degree of the threat; the defence aspect -- insurance against the

possible consequences of conflict -- was not incompatible with the settlement idea -- the attempt to eliminate the conflict itself.

These two elements of international politics were present in varying degrees in British diplomacy before the war. When Russia posed a threat to British interests in China in 1898 there was at first an attempt to come to terms with her -- to find security through mutual settlement of a disputed question.¹¹ Joseph Chamberlain, the influential Colonial Secretary in Salisbury's third ministry, thought that "he who sups with the devil must have a long spoon," and the "long spoon" eventually took the form of a definite defensive alliance between England and Japan after Chamberlain's attempt to create "the natural alliance" between Germany and Britain proved unsuccessful.¹² Though the Anglo-Japanese alliance represented the defence idea, it did not exclude the idea of settlement: both Japan and Britain, now equipped with their "long spoon", continued to sup with their mutual devil.¹³ This thread of British policy -- evident before, such as in Rosebery's Pamir settlement of 1893 -- culminated in the settlement of 1907.¹⁴ The Japanese attempt at a policy of protecting her interests by negotiation broke down, and she asserted her position in Korea through the defeat of Russia in the war of 1904-1905.¹⁵

One result for British policy was paradoxical. The Russian defeat and the revolutionary activity in

Russia largely consequent upon this defeat changed the balance of power in Europe: Chamberlain's "natural ally" was more and more seen in Britain as a threat.¹⁶ This was due less to specific disputes -- there were few at the time -- than to the increase in German power, particularly naval power -- which gave to the huge German army a new significance for Britain -- and to a general appearance of aggressiveness. Developing ambitions in the world beyond Europe, which was now largely a closed shop, seemed to combine with a strong movement towards hegemony in Europe. There was, moreover, a disturbing irrationality and erratic quality to German aspirations overseas. Though one might not agree with the idea of one British imperialist that British colonial expansion sprang from motivation deep within the instincts of the nation, it is nevertheless true that there was a certain logic in British expansion which seemed to be lacking in German.¹⁷ Angra Pequena, the Kruger Telegram, Kiaochow, Samoa, the Morocco crisis, and above all the naval build-up, which seemed directed at Britain -- all seemed impetuous and blunt, unwarranted aggressiveness per se. The attempt to establish German hegemony over the Continent was also carried out with considerable bluntness, and when, in the first Morocco crisis, Germany attempted to assert an element of domination over French policy, this crisis assumed the nature of an Anglo-German struggle for France.¹⁸ About the same time (October, 1904) and again at Bjorko in July, 1905, there

was a German attempt to nullify the Franco-Russian alliance by bringing the weakened Russia into the German defensive sphere.¹⁹ The danger of the situation -- a potential Continental bloc and British isolation -- did not go unnoticed in London. "If France is left in the lurch," wrote Sir Charles Hardinge on Grey's memorandum on Morocco of 20 February, 1906,

. . . an agreement or alliance between France, Germany and Russia in the near future is certain. This has been twice proposed during the last six years and is the Kaiser's ideal, France and Russia becoming satellites within the German sphere. There are many politicians in Russia in favour of such a scheme. . . .²⁰

In June, 1906, Grey reflected, "The Germans do not realize that England has always drifted or deliberately gone into opposition to any Power which establishes a hegemony in Europe."²¹

Morocco was thus a focal point for a broad political struggle between England and Germany. Though German policy in Morocco did take the form of "testing the Entente", there was in the beginning of the Entente little to test, for the agreement of 1904 had represented not the defence aspect of policy but the idea of settlement.²² The portion of it that was of a defensive nature -- where Britain and France pledged each other to diplomatic support in Egypt and Morocco -- was considered of minor importance at the time and was in fact inserted at the request of Lord Cromer to ensure a free hand in Egypt.²³ The agreement as a whole represented no great change in

British policy, for the settlement thread had been pursued almost since Anglo-French relations had first been poisoned over Egypt in 1882; it was in French policy that the major change took place, caused mainly by the complications created through the Russo-Japanese war and the Anglo-Japanese alliance.²⁴ On the other hand, when that portion of the agreement which was directed against other powers was challenged so bluntly by Germany, the defensive nature of the Anglo-French relationship was created, and it became necessary to support France. Indeed, the resignation of Theophile Delcassé, French Foreign Minister, was indicative of the state of the balance in Europe, and without definite British involvement to bolster France, the hegemony of Germany -- an apparently aggressive Germany -- would be a fact.²⁵ The expression of the new defensive nature which the German action gave to the Entente were the Anglo-French military talks, agreed to by Grey on 15 January, 1906.²⁶

The British situation with regard to the Anglo-French staff talks and the general position in the Entente reflected the two aspects of British diplomacy. Though there was an increasing defensive attitude towards Germany, motivated by awareness of her power and suspicion of her intentions, there was also a hesitancy about total commitment of British power in an alliance, lest it were tied to the policy of another country in a matter of war or peace. Thus when agreement was given to direct conversations

between the British and French ministries of war there was also a stipulation that "it must be understood that these communications did not commit either Government," a stipulation repeated on several subsequent occasions, such as in August, 1907, and November, 1912, when the Cabinet as a whole first became aware of these talks.²⁷

The leaning towards France and the idea of bolstering France against the apparent will to dominate the Continent was not incompatible with the pursuit of friendly relations with Germany and the idea of working with her for the general peace of Europe, or even with pursuing a settlement policy on the greatest question which divided the two Powers -- the question of German naval strength. There were some, both during the July crisis and in the period before the war when the British were pursuing this slightly ambivalent policy, who were dissatisfied with the policy. "If our politicians were only patriots," wrote General Ewart, Director of Military Operations, in June, 1908, "an Anglo-French-Russian Alliance would be the best answer to German aggressiveness."²⁸ But patriotism involved settlement as well as defence: not involving the nation in an unnecessary war was as important as resorting to war or the threat of war when vital British interests were at stake. Because Grey was suspicious of Germany, it did not follow that he had unlimited faith that France and Russia would not drag Britain into an unnecessary war.

The effect of the Agadir crisis of 1911 was to increase the suspicion of Germany by Grey and the British Government in general.²⁹ The incident seemed another example of German ambitions to expand in the world beyond Europe and to bring France into the German sphere. The defensive posture adopted by Britain in this crisis was even more marked than in 1905-1906, and there is an element of truth in the accusation levelled at Grey that British policy in the crisis became more French than the French. There were marked differences from the first Morocco crisis, when the French had actively sought the support of Britain. In Joseph Caillaux, French Prime Minister during the Agadir crisis, the Germans were dealing with a man much more favourable to Germany than Delcassé, and with the commercial treaty of 1909 there had been a semblance of Franco-German cooperation with respect to Morocco.³⁰ Indeed, the course of events in the first part of the Franco-German negotiations seemed to leave Britain out altogether, thus reversing the situation of the 1905 crisis when it was exclusion of Germany that was the occasion -- though not the cause -- of the international crisis.³¹ This situation -- that of a potential de facto isolation -- set the tone for the British reaction. Grey told Metternich, the German Ambassador, "we could not remain passive spectators of a new settlement made between Germany, France, and Spain, to take the place of the Act of Algeciras."³² And at the Mansion House

Lloyd George asserted that "Britain should at all hazards maintain her place and prestige among the Great Powers."³³ It is true, as Grey subsequently argued, that the British worked for a settlement between France and Germany.³⁴ But it had been considered essential that Britain assume a defensive posture at the side of France in the negotiations. It was the German implication -- through failure to respond to Grey's enquiries -- that Franco-German relations were not England's business that prompted the British war stance in the summer of 1911 just as the implicit assumption by Austria-Hungary that Serbia was not a vital Russian interest led to Russian mobilization in the summer of 1914.³⁵

In the meantime one result of the Agadir crisis was general intensification of the defensive posture of Great Britain. Various aspects of the possibility of war with Germany were discussed in the War Office and Cabinet; an arrangement between French and British in 1912 left to the French navy the task of protecting the vital British interest of her Mediterranean sea route, in return for British agreement to protect the Channel and Atlantic coasts of France.³⁶ Both in popular opinion and in the official world the line was more clearly drawn, with friends and enemies more clearly differentiated, particularly since this event combined with the high point of Anglo-German naval rivalry.³⁷

Yet the course of British foreign policy from the end of the Agadir crisis to the coming of the war tended to reflect the settlement idea in foreign affairs rather than defence. Eyre Crowe's assertion in May, 1906 -- when Bulow suggested a "friendly understanding" -- that there were "no differences whatever" between England and Germany remained essentially true in the period 1911-1914 as regards specific area conflicts.³⁸ But there was scope for a "friendly understanding" on the question of naval rivalry. Hence the Haldane mission of 1912. The failure of this attempt at settlement with Germany reflected the British -- and European -- dilemma on the general armament and security question. Berlin would agree to naval limitation to the extent desired by London only in return for British neutrality in a Franco-German war -- in effect the abandonment of France to Germany and of the policy of preventing domination of the Continent by a single power.³⁹ But at this time it was still generally taken as an axiom that "the Policy of England is to prevent any Continental Power from attaining a position of superiority that would allow it to dominate, and dictate to, the rest of Europe."⁴⁰ Admittedly, had there been a bargain on German naval limitations it would have implied security for Britain in her island position -- at least at this time when the vital role of the submarine and aeroplane had not yet emerged -- and in providing such security would have removed what was considered the main

cause of friction between England and Germany, so that the defence aspect could be de-emphasised. But it was a doubtful bargain to give up the real security of a strong Continental bridgehead in return for the paper security of a naval limitation arrangement -- ultimately a question of trust. It was also a doubtful point that Germany would content herself with the domination of Europe. It was significant that in 1914 when Berlin tried to buy British neutrality by a guarantee of the territorial integrity of France after the war, Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador, raised the question of the fate of the French colonies and was given no guarantee on that point.⁴¹

But in spite of the failure of the attempt at a settlement of the naval question, there was still scope for general collaboration by England and Germany in keeping their European house in order, and the success of Grey's policy of working with Germany in the Balkan crisis of 1912-1913 allowed for an element of optimism on the general situation. Indeed, at this time he spoke to the German Ambassador of his hope that there would soon be "no groups" in international politics.⁴² And in July of 1914, before the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia exploded upon Europe, it was the settlement aspect of diplomacy that predominated in the Foreign Office. In view of a generally quiet situation in Europe, disturbed only by the Albanian question and Austro-Serbian question created

by the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June -- not considered at all alarming in Whitehall -- the Foreign Office was chiefly occupied with settling what was now a traditional source of irritation, even after the settlement of 1907, the conflicting interests of Russia and England in Persia and Tibet.⁴³ As regards relations with France, a conference was sitting in London in an attempt to end a dispute over the New Hebrides. Sir Arthur Nicolson thought it would conclude successfully. "This will be of considerable advantage," he thought, "as there was considerable friction over the matter."⁴⁴ And with Germany settlement had been reached on the Baghdad Railway and Portuguese colonies -- the only actual area conflicts that had divided England and the "natural ally" of the Joseph Chamberlain era.⁴⁵

After 23 July, when the Austrian ultimatum was presented to Serbia and the Balkan crisis suddenly became acute, the emphasis of British policy was again on settlement rather than defence. Grey did not wish to act in terms of groups of the Powers. Just four days before the assassination incident he had told Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador, that he was anxious not to lose any of the ground that had been gained during the Balkan crisis of 1912-1913 as regards relations between England and Germany and that the British Government "wished to prevent any question that arose from throwing the groups, as such, into opposition."⁴⁶ As regards the "Serbian quarrel,"

he felt there was no British interest involved; and he did not assume initially that Germany supported fully the policy of Austria-Hungary.⁴⁷ Hence the plan of joint mediation by the four Powers which did not have direct interests in Serbia, first suggested to Lichnowsky on 24 July.⁴⁸ It was assumed that the brusque nature of the Austrian démarche meant that it was too late to stop the development of Austrian and Russian mobilisation; but the four Powers would request Austria and Russia to refrain from crossing the frontier till matters could be arranged at Vienna and St. Petersburg.⁴⁹ But essential to this idea was the cooperation of Germany. "We can do nothing for moderation," he wrote on the 25th, "unless Germany is prepared pari passu to do the same."⁵⁰

It was on this point -- the question of the German role in Austrian policy and hence the question of whether the issue involved the European groups -- that Grey's attitude differed from that of the Russian and French Governments, as well as from his principal officials in the Foreign Office. This difference became evident on the evening of the 24th, when a communication from Buchanan reached Whitehall.⁵¹ Buchanan reported that in the opinion of Sergei Sazonov, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, "the Serbian question was but part of general European question," and the British could not efface themselves. It was made clear to the Ambassador that France and Russia were operating à deux in the crisis; and both Sazonov

and Paléologue, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, took the view that the situation called for a defensive or deterrent approach by England: she should declare her solidarity with France and Russia on the Serbian question; if England did not make common cause with France and Russia from the outset she would render war more likely. Sir Eyre Crowe's comment on this report was that the chances of enlisting France in an effort to hold back Russia were now gone, both Powers looking upon the episode as a challenge to the Triple Entente by the Triple Alliance.⁵² Crowe felt that Germany could be made to hesitate if it were immediately made clear that England would stand with France and Russia.

Our interests (he wrote) are tied up with those of France and Russia in this struggle, which is not for the possession of Serbia, but one between Germany aiming at a political dictatorship in Europe and the Powers who desire to retain individual freedom. If we can help to avoid the conflict by showing our naval strength, ready to be instantly used, it would be wrong not to make the effort.

But Grey's response reflected the idea that the question of aggression was not clear-cut, and in a situation such as that in which Britain stood, deterrence could work both ways, and commitment of British power to Russia on the Serbian question could make war more likely.⁵³

In Grey's mind it was a question of mutual concession -- it took two to make a quarrel and two to keep the peace, he told the Austrian Ambassador.⁵⁴ Consequently it made

sense, from the point of view of keeping the peace -- the dominant British interest in the crisis -- that Grey should resist any attempts to give carte blanche to Russian policy in Serbia. As Sir Edward Goschen pointed out to Jules Cambon, French Ambassador in Berlin, a blunt statement by Sir Edward Grey that England would fight on the side of France, "while it might cause Germany to hesitate, might equally urge Russia on."⁵⁵ In Paris Bertie echoed these views as to the proper use of British power in the crisis:

The French instead of putting pressure on the Russian Government to moderate their zeal expect us to give the Germans to understand that we mean fighting if war breaks out . If we gave an assurance of armed assistance to France and Russia now, Russia would become more exacting and France would follow in her wake.⁵⁶

And in St. Petersburg Buchanan, pressed by the same argument, urged upon Sazonov the need for moderation. His aim with Sazonov throughout the crisis, he reflected on 3 August, had been "to dissuade him from doing anything to precipitate a conflict, so as to allow time for us and the other Powers to mediate."⁵⁷

But by this time the mediation approach had failed; Russia and France were at war with Germany, and Buchanan was waiting to hear the result of the House of Commons Debate that afternoon. "I only pray," he wrote, "that England will prove true to herself and to her friends, as if she deserts them in their hour of need she will

find herself isolated after the war; and the hours of our Empire will be numbered."⁵⁸

This was the other side of British policy, the defensive aspect, based on the idea that once there was war between France and Germany it would not be a war for the settlement of the Serbian question but one involving the hegemony of Europe and consequently the security and position of Great Britain. Though Grey had differed from Crowe on the extent to which Britain's position in the Entente should be used as a force of peace, through deterring Germany, he had long been convinced that British interests could not allow the loss of France under German domination, which would be the consequence of French defeat by Germany. In February, 1906, he had expressed the view that the British could not keep out if war broke out between France and Germany without losing their good name and friends and wrecking their policy and position in the world.⁵⁹ In the crisis of July, 1914, he was of the same opinion: "if war came, the interest of Britain required that we should not stand aside, while France fought alone in the West, but must support her."⁶⁰ But, since the first object of British policy was the preservation of peace in the East through mediation, it was important that this defensive aspect be kept in the background in the early stages of the crisis and be pointed out only in guarded fashion. The order of priorities was expressed by Buchanan to Sazonov on 25 July, when he repeated

a statement of British policy which had been made in April, 1914,

. . . . that England could play role of mediator at Berlin and Vienna to better purpose as friend who, if her counsels of moderation were disregarded, might one day be converted into an ally, than if she were to declare herself Russia's ally at once.⁶¹

On the Wednesday, July 29, when Grey met with the German Ambassador, this dual aspect of British policy was particularly evident. If Germany and then France became involved, he told Lichnowsky, "the issue might be so great that it would involve all European interests; and I did not wish him to be misled by the friendly tone of our conversation -- which I hoped would continue -- into thinking that we should stand aside."⁶² But when the Ambassador attempted to press for more specific detail as to the circumstances, if any, under which Britain would intervene, Grey showed his concern about keeping Britain in a position where she could act a mediator role: he did not wish "to use anything that was like a threat or an attempt to apply pressure by saying that if things became worse, we should intervene."

That night, in an interview between the British Ambassador and the German Chancellor in Berlin, it was evident that Bethmann Hollweg was well aware of the defensive aspect of British policy in regard to France, in spite of Grey's careful language: "As far as he was

able to judge key-note of British policy, it was evident that Great Britain would never allow France to be crushed."⁶³ But the Chancellor hoped that within this broad aim of British policy there was still room for a French defeat at the hands of Germany. But as Grey intimated in his reply to Goschen, the fact of German victory over France, quite apart from subsequent changes, would be sufficient to establish German hegemony in Western Europe, which, in his thinking, went against a vital British interest. France, he said, "could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power and become subordinate to German policy without further territory being taken from her."⁶⁴ The following day, when the danger was even greater than the mediation approach had failed and the suspicion was greater than lack of German co-operation was responsible, the defensive aspect was made clearer. Grey told the German Ambassador that unless it were evident that France and Russia had rejected a reasonable proposal, "if France became involved we should be drawn in."⁶⁵

As regards the rational, strategic forces in British Foreign policy, such as in the mind of Sir Edward Grey, it was principally this defensive aspect -- the idea that France had been established as part of the British defensive sphere -- that drew Britain into the war. Britain was fighting, Grey wrote on 9 September, 1914, "to save the west of Europe from being dominated by Prussian militarism."⁶⁶ Such domination, he later

reflected, would mean the negation of the liberty and national life of Britain as an independent state.⁶⁷

These forces however were but a small though powerful section of the country and a minority of the Government. In giving the German Ambassador the view that Britain would be drawn into a war between France and Germany, Grey was expressing only his own view as to the requirements of British interests. Thus, though he informed Cambon of this statement to Lichnowsky, in order to refute the accusation that his attitude in the crisis was responsible for the imminence of war, he had to point out that communication of this information was "not the same thing as taking an engagement to France."⁶⁸ Great uncertainty prevailed in the nation: as Grey pointed out to Cambon, public opinion would probably have supported the idea of British assistance to France in a war that had arisen as a result of the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, but it was a quite different matter when Serbia was the cause of conflict, France being drawn in through her alliance obligation to Russia.⁶⁹

The Cabinet in fact had decided that no pledge could be given at that time.⁷⁰ It was not yet evident which way the Cabinet would go, with danger of a split in the Government. Though Grey had suggested at the time of the first Morocco crisis that the British ought then to face the general question whether they could keep out if war broke out between France and Germany, this was never

done at the Cabinet level of Government, partly because of his own tendency to keep department business to himself, but also partly because of general indifference in the Liberal Government towards the great questions of national security.⁷¹ According to Lloyd George, most of the Cabinet were aghast in 1912 when the Anglo-French staff talks came to light; yet these military arrangements were only the reflection of the political policy of supporting France -- "diplomatic support" alone being generally meaningless without a degree of military backing -- and the Cabinet did not come to terms at all with the implications of the political policy.⁷² According to the testimony of Leo Amery, moreover, the military arrangements

. . . were no secret to anyone interested in such matters. I had freely referred to them in speaking of Army estimates. But the Government's pacifist supporters were always content to be assured that we were under no foreign commitment.⁷³

In view of this general situation the chances of developing a consensus on the question of support for France was very remote, and in this regard the German invasion of Belgium played a crucial role, in Cabinet, in Parliament, and the nation. In the words of Spender, editor of the Westminster Gazette and a close friend of Grey:

For nine Englishmen out of ten, everything else was swept up into the question of Belgium. The evident fact that Germany was going to violate Belgium was not only for us the clear casus belli, but clinching evidence of the aggressive intention in

what had gone before. For those of us who feared divisions in the Cabinet the moment of greatest relief was when Belgium, ⁷⁴decided proprio motu to resist the invader.

And Grey wrote in 1915, the invasion of Belgium decided the overwhelming majority of our people to enter into the war.⁷⁵ "Except for Belgium, Great Britain would not have gone to war with the united spirit she has shown."⁷⁶

The restoration of the independence of Belgium thus became the focal point of the public attitude of the British Government towards the war and the sine qua non of British peace policy -- in Grey's words, "an absolute minimum": Great Britain, he felt, was "bound to fight on till the Belgian point is secured even if we had to fight alone."⁷⁷ But the role of Belgium in British war aims was more as a symbol of victory than as a strategic or rational factor. The relative strategic importance of Belgium in relation to the question of maintenance of France had been clearly established at the meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence sub-committee which had studied the subject in 1908 and 1909, the general conclusion of which had been that assistance to France should not be left to turn upon the "mere pretext of Belgian neutrality."⁷⁸ This was common sense: once France fell under German domination the idea of a British continental bridgehead in Belgium was impractical -- like Cromwell's acquisition of Dunkirk. Though there were of course obvious strategic reasons why the independence of Belgium should be a necessary part of any European

settlement, the role that Belgium actually played in British policy was that of an emotional and ideological factor, and a means of placing Britain on the side of legality.

Such considerations were of course far from negligible as factors to consider amongst the forces of war in the British nation. As Robert Cecil pointed out in a letter written a week after British intervention,

The English people have a real belief in Justice and Liberty -- due to centuries of national training. The feeling on behalf of Belgium arose from these sentiments. Oddly these are the only dangerous portion in our international character. They impel us sometimes to act the part of Providence and earn both the anger and contempt of foreigners, e.g. Bulgarian atrocities.⁷⁹

Thus the call upon Freedom and Justice was a valuable means for the British liberal leaders both to rationalize the stark fact of war in their own minds -- when in fact the war was the abnegation of what 19th Century liberalism stood for -- and to rally behind the war effort this nation with "real belief in Justice and Liberty," readily responsive therefore to argument of good and evil, freedom and oppression. Grey, in Cecil's words, was "remarkably free from this defect following in that aspect the Salisbury rather than the Gladstone tradition," and he generally refrained from taking up the demagogue role. His Commons speech of 3 August, 1914, called for consideration of the issue "from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations, free from all

passion as to why peace was not preserved."⁸⁰ But there were others willing to take up the task. At the Guildhall on 4 September, 1914, for example, the Prime Minister helped sow the seeds of fierce emotional involvement in the ground that had produced the upheavals over the Bulgarian and Armenian atrocities: the Germans were guilty of "outrages" and "buccaneering levies" against the civilian population of Belgium; the "sack of Louvain" was "the greatest crime committed against civilisation and culture since the Thirty Years' War"; and it was the British task "to prevent, yes, and to avenge, these intolerable wrongs." The cynical violation of Belgium was moreover but a first step: the not too distant aim of German policy was to crush the independence of the other free States of Europe, such as Holland and Switzerland -- "countries like our own imbued and sustained with the spirit of liberty -- we were one after the other to be bent to the yoke."⁸¹

Such attempts to harness the nation to the war effort were more than successful. As George Cadbury wrote in November, 1914, now that the British had entered the war "it is as impossible to stop it as to stop a raging torrent. The anger of the people naturally has been roused"⁸² In early 1915 the American Ambassador in London wrote: "Don't fool yourself about peace. If anyone should talk about peace, or doves, or ploughshares here, they'd shoot him."⁸³ And in October a detached

British intellectual remarked, "the nation doesn't really want to stop it -- because of the nullity of life."⁸⁴

Whatever the cause, this situation had its element of danger. The nation was largely ignorant of the questionable basis of the long term optimism that was often preached. Up to the German offensive of 1918 there were few who doubted at all the idea that the Allies would be victorious, and should the rational forces begin to lead towards a peace settlement falling short of popular momentum, there was much danger that the latter would overrun and destroy the particular Government, and perhaps even the very structure of State.⁸⁵ Those who originally promoted intervention in the war for the sake of the security and strength of the State would then be hoist by their own petard.

But in 1914-1915 there was no major conflict: the strategic or rational factors gave to British policy a direction which went quite beyond the technical casus belli, and on a rational as well as an emotional plane the principal object of the war was Victory -- in Grey's words of November, 1914, "the basic aim remains the rout of Germany."⁸⁶ The basic premise behind this policy was the conviction of German aggressiveness. In his general German policy up to the start of the war Grey had tried to compromise between the settlement and defence aspects of foreign policy, attempting to follow a middle road between the Radicals, who, with their "happy confidence

in the gradual and final escape of the world from the perils of war," felt there was little cause for suspicion of Germany, and opposed Grey's pro-French leaning, and on the other hand those who felt an unequivocal commitment to France and Russia was necessary -- apparently having no doubts at all about the aggressiveness of Germany and no qualms about the idea of binding British power more tightly to the policy of France and Russia on particular issues.⁸⁷ When Grey eventually concluded that Germany had not been working for peace at all, his disillusionment was great -- according to Herbert Samuel, at the morning Cabinet meeting on 2 August, 1914, he was "outraged" at German action.⁸⁸ In the crisis of 1906 he had written that if war came before his suggestions could be developed in diplomacy, "it will only be because Germany has made up her mind that she wants war and intends to have it anyhow, which I do not believe is the case."⁸⁹ He had not believed this was the case in 1914 either; but after the failure of his peace efforts he became one of the leading proponents of this theory. "Germany planned this war," he wrote to Spring Rice in September, 1914, "and chose her own time for forcing it on Europe;" and German policy was now inspired by the idea of crushing Britain and destroying the British Empire.⁹⁰ Nothing could have prevented the war, he later wrote, except "a change in the Prussian nature."⁹¹

CHAPTER II: WAR AIMS AND THE ALLIES

"The solidarity of the allies in this war is marvellous. . . but it must be remembered that there is no community of aim except detestation of Germany and a determination to avoid a repetition of her menace."

29 August, 1916¹

Because of the belief that the war was the result of a deliberate German policy of European domination, the first month of the war saw the end of the settlement aspect of Grey's policy towards Germany. This meant the establishment of decisive victory as the primary object of British policy and also a greater commitment to a policy of settlement with France and Russia -- an intensification of Grey's Entente policy. The momentum established for specific war aims was largely the result of this development in broad policy; the goal of Victory did not follow from the specific aims, as is often asserted or implied, but preceded and established them.² Moreover, these specific aims were not in themselves the prime considerations in the question of an end to the war. they would not be so unless the basic policy of Victory should be questioned, and because of the deeply entrenched belief in the German will to dominate Europe, such questioning would develop only because of doubts on the possibility of eventual Allied triumph.

The greater commitment to the policy of the Entente in the broad policy of the British Government was a

consequence of the increased insecurity caused by the fact of war, and particularly by the early German successes in the war. Before the war the attempt to maintain friendly relations with Germany had been an important corollary to maintaining a large element of freedom in Britain's defensive relationship with France; but with the demise of Anglo-German relations, it became necessary that freedom in specific issues of policy be partly sacrificed to the larger aim of maintaining the Entente in the face of the German military assault. When the war began British strategic thinkers felt that the Franco-Russian military alliance, assisted by the relatively small but strategically significant British Expeditionary Force, might be sufficient to check Germany.³ In this event it would be evident that an effective balance in Europe still existed, and the British could still exercise an element of control and restraint, without either a great loss of freedom in policy or heavy military involvement. The British, as Grey has pointed out, were "in the war, but without the obligation of Allies if a chance of stopping the war on fair terms had come, we were in a specially strong position to urge upon France and Russia that advantage should be taken of the opportunity."⁴ But the early German successes -- the victories over Russia at Tannenburg and the Masurian Lakes and especially the advance far into Belgium and France -- meant that the Franco-Russian Alliance failed to pass the military test, as it had

failed to pass a diplomatic test in 1908-1909.⁵ As Grey later wrote, "the great German success in France and Belgium . . . were only stopped and not cancelled by the Battle of the Marne."⁶ This failure of the Franco-Russian Alliance in August, 1914, brought England into the Alliance and eventually caused her to make a huge military contribution in an attempt to restore the balance.

The definite commitment of British policy to the Franco-Russian Alliance was marked by the agreement of 4 September, 1914, by which the British Government bound itself not to make a separate peace and to present peace terms to Germany only in common with France and Russia, thus making British policy, in Grey's words, but one thread in the skein of Allied diplomacy.⁷ Though this agreement was not the result of British initiative, it was the goal of British policy -- and initially the raison d'etre of the war -- to maintain the Entente; and for this end it was vital that France and Russia should not doubt British loyalty and should be encouraged to resist German domination. Moreover, British dependence upon France and Russia for security was increased by the public statements of the German Government on the British role in the coming of the war and the general anti-British nature which the war assumed for the German nation. Grey wrote,

We, of course, agreed without question and immediately to sign the Agreement of September 4; the first effect of it was to reassure and

satisfy France and Russia; in a short time, when the extraordinary and sustained hatred of Germany against Britain became manifest, it was our turn to be comforted by the thought that we had Allies pledged to stand by us.⁸

The emotional involvement of the French nation -- for whom the main reality of the war was the invasion of their country and not the diplomatic preliminaries -- ensured French enmity as well should the British prove disloyal. After France and Belgium had suffered terribly in lives and devastated territory in the first few weeks, "it could not be for us to suggest peace till they desired; at any rate, not till we had suffered as much as they."⁹

Because of this commitment to adhere to the policy of her Allies, as well as her own reasons of policy arising from the early failure of the Franco-Russian Alliance and the British Expeditionary Force to check Germany at the frontiers, Britain's major war aim henceforth was simply the goal of Victory. "The German victories," Grey wrote, "had to be turned into a defeat before there could be any prospect of a fair or honourable peace."¹⁰ Once Germany had established a strong territorial advantage, any settlement would reflect that advantage: as Grey told the American Ambassador on 7 August, 1914, "what terms of peace would be fair would depend upon how things went;" and agreement to peace while Germany held such an advanced strategic frontier in the West would be equivalent to an admission of German superiority, and would ultimately mean German political hegemony in Europe.¹¹

But even a return to the status quo was not good enough. Though such a development would assert the superiority of the forces opposing German political expansion, which in itself could deter future attempts by Germany to alter the status quo, this argument would apply only if that superiority were maintained. It was apparent soon after the early German successes that only massive mobilisation of the British war potential would establish such superiority, and continued massive British involvement in Continental defence after the return of peace -- in order to secure the Franco-German frontier as the first line of defence of the British Empire -- was hardly desirable to a nation where, as Lord Bryce pointed out to President Wilson in September, 1914, "the great desire is to get rid once for all of these huge fleets and Armies."¹² In Grey's opinion, what was wanted was "durable peace making possible reduced expenditure on armaments."¹³ A satisfactory peace, therefore, was one by which the German threat to France was less than it was at the start of the war. In 1905, as Grey had remarked, "France had consented, under German pressure, to the humiliation of dismissing M. Delcassé . . . because the German armaments were so much more ready for war than he own."¹⁴ In August, 1914, this armament superiority was clearly demonstrated, as was the fact that British policy before the war, in the works of General Sir William Robertson, "was sadly out of step with our military

preparations."¹⁵ It was vital that such superiority not exist at the war's end. Britain, Grey wrote in September, five days after she had joined the Franco-Russian Alliance, "could not again have a great military power in the middle of Europe preparing war in this way and forcing it upon us."¹⁶ In November, in a public statement on British war aims, the Prime Minister asserted that Britain would not sheathe her sword until France had been adequately secured against the menace of future aggression and until "Prussian military domination" had been 'utterly destroyed."¹⁷

But though the idea of future security and "durable peace" were considered the prime objects of the war and the aggressive mood and manifest power of Germany prohibited a mere return to the status quo, there was in the first two years of the war no systematic attempt by the Cabinet as a whole to make detailed plans for the future security of Britain and the peace of Europe, particularly as regards peace terms for Germany in Europe. Grey himself, like Asquith, Richard Haldane, and David Lloyd George, took the view that a crushing Allied victory would in itself bring an end to the "Prussian militarism" which was seen as the main obstacle to security and peace.¹⁸ There were, he told Page after the despatch of the ultimatum on Belgium, "two Germanys;" the Germany of men like themselves and like Lichnowsky and Jagow and "the Germany of the war party." "The war party," he felt, "has got the upper hand."¹⁹ A solution to this problem, he later reflected,

was "an internal change that made Germany a democratic State emancipated from the rule of the Prussian military party." Though this could not be imposed directly from outside, "it might be the indirect result of defeat of Germany in war."²⁰ Hence, as he told Buchanan after the apparent turn of the tide in September, 1914, when the question of degree of victory was raised by the Grand Duke Nicholas, Russian Commander-in-Chief,

His Majesty's Government intend to join in prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour until a lasting peace can be secured.

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We assume that Anglo-French forces will press home every advantage they gain, and will, if they succeed, advance as far as they can into Germany.²¹

It was largely in the attempt to defeat Germany that momentum was established for more specific war aims. These developed as side effects of the world-wide struggle against the threat of German hegemony: partly through the conquest of territory of Germany and her Turkish satellite in the course of this great defensive struggle; partly through the need to conciliate Britain's Allies, in order to maintain the political unity necessary to combat German power; partly through concessions to neutral countries in order to win them to the Allied side.

I. EUROPE

In Europe, the agreements with Italy in April, 1915, and Roumania in July, 1916, created obligations in British war aims policy at the expense of the Austrian

Empire. These obligations, as a General Staff paper later commented, "were contracted for no reason of policy other than that of getting as many allies as possible on any terms that might be asked."²² Moreover, the Russian-French-British agreement of 4 September, 1914, technically committed Britain to the aims of France and Russia on the frontiers of Germany and Austria-Hungary. That there would be alterations from the status quo ante in the event of victory was quite clear: "if . . . the French and Russians won easily," Grey told Page at the start of the war, "they would insist that Germany should require a lesson."²³ In the West, for instance, it was obvious that part of this lesson would be the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to France. As regards the Eastern frontier, Sazonov aired his views to Paleologue and Buchanan a week after the agreement was signed. Basing his plan on "the principle of nationality," he wished to see Russia obtain the mouths of the Niemen, the greater part of Posen with the Polish districts of Galicia and Silesia united to Poland, and with Russian Galicia incorporated in Russia proper. Moreover, Serbia should acquire Bosnia and Herzegovina with part of Dalmatia, giving her access to the sea.²⁴ Accordingly Asquith's recruitment speech in Dublin two weeks later was a convenient occasion to publicly take up the cause of Poland and Serbia as British aims.

How can you Irishmen (he asked) be deaf to the cry of the smaller nationalities to help them in their struggle for freedom . . . as in the case of Poland or the Balkan States in regaining what they have lost or in acquiring and putting upon a stable foundation what has never been fully theirs?²⁵

Throughout the war, in fact, British policy in Eastern Europe -- and in the South-East to a lesser extent -- was merely a function of Russian policy. The British policymakers had of course their liberalistic reasons for greeting with enthusiasm the Russian promises of greater autonomy to the Poles -- the first in a long series of Allied attempts to win support for their cause by promises of greater freedom and power -- but the idea that such a policy would "win over the Poles" to a greater contribution towards Russian military success was the main reason why the early Russian proclamation was seen in the Foreign Office as "a statesmanlike move in the right direction." The idea that overmuch enthusiasm for the new Poland should interfere with the Alliance itself was of course anathema.²⁶

Hence a long silence on the question of Poland on the part of the British Government and the Embassy in St. Petersburg, which earned an expression from Sazonov, in April, 1916, of his "gratitude and appreciation."²⁷ In August, after the relatively pro-Polish Sazonov had been replaced by Sturmer, Grey contemplated a departure from this policy of silence, since the Polish population

was "disheartened by having received no encouragement from the Allies," and the Germans were apparently "treating Poland as a strategical question" -- an approach which Russia should emulate.²⁸ But four days later he had changed his mind:

In view of friction with Minister for Foreign Affairs about offensive article and German intrigue I think it would be well to leave Polish question alone and certainly not to mention it to the Emperor.

It is reported now that Germans have suspended any favourable proclamation to the Poles. This may mean that German Chancellor's denunciation of any restoration of Poland to Russia will be thrown over and that Germany hopes to bribe Russian reactionaries to separate peace by restoring occupied territories.

In this event any warnings of ours about Poland will fall flat and do harm.²⁹

Until the end of his term of office Grey's feelings on Poland remained the same. On 21 November, 1916, he minuted on a memorandum on the Polish independence movement that for England and France to intervene any further "would be to split with Russia and to destroy all chance of victory by the Allies: in this event the heel of Prussia would grind her Poles more heavily in the mud than ever."³⁰

II. AFRICA AND THE PACIFIC

Beyond Europe, where there was an extension of the new explicit emphasis on the defensive aspect of policy towards Germany, the first development of momentum for British war aims came from the operations of forces of the British Empire against German colonial possessions.

These were "for the most part originally conceived with a strictly limited objective in view."³¹ For as Robert Cecil pointed out a week after the war began, "Whatever may have been true in the past, nowadays no contemporary statesman wants to increase British territory."³²

In Africa the first steps involved the German communications systems. On 5 August -- the day on which the German transatlantic cables were cut by the Royal Navy -- a subcommittee of the Committee of Imperial Defence decided upon the destruction of two German communications installations on the coast of German South-West Africa, a project extended on the 9th to include the installations at Windhuk in the centre of the colony.³³ In West Africa the wireless installations at Kamina in Togoland were the initial objects of a combined effort by British and French colonial forces.³⁴ On 27 August, following the surrender of German forces in Togoland, instructions were sent for the seizure of the port of Duala in the Cameroons and destruction of the wireless station there.³⁵ And in East Africa the initial object of the campaign was the capture of Tanga "with a view to ensuring the Uganda Railway against an attack from this direction."³⁶

The scope of the operations in Africa, however -- in the words of the C.I.D. report of March, 1917 -- "was enlarged by the force of circumstances, and the conquest of the German colony itself became the objective."³⁷ These circumstances varied. The capture of Windhuk necessitated

the conquest of all of German South-West Africa, a project completed only in July, 1915, after initial delays caused by rebellion in the Northern Free State and Western Transvaal.³⁸ In the Cameroons, Duala surrendered to the Allied forces on 27 September; but the German force was still intact and dangerous, and two days later General Dobbell was instructed to proceed to the conquest of the whole colony -- an operation not completed until February, 1916.³⁹ In East Africa the British attack on Tanga was repulsed by the German forces and they were able to frequently raid the Uganda Railway.⁴⁰ General Smith-Dorrien, commander of the British forces in East Africa, pointed out to the War Office in December, 1915, however, that "a German invasion of British East Africa on a big scale would appear to be out of the question." A campaign for the conquest of the German colony was thus a matter of "whether the Government desire, when Peace Negotiations arise, to be in possession of the country in order to retain it permanently or to use it as a lever for negotiation." Otherwise, the best policy was merely to secure the defense of the British colony, maintain the blockade of the German East Africa coast, and "leave the Germans alone to stew in their own juice."⁴¹ In early 1916, however, the decision was taken for a forward policy.⁴² Smith-Dorrien had been "extremely anxious to conduct this campaign" -- indeed, in all theatres military campaigns provided much local momentum for their continuation and extension.⁴³ But most of the task was entrusted to General Botha of the Union of South

Africa, who with almost entirely South African resources had successfully conducted the campaign in South-West Africa.⁴⁴

The role of General Botha and the South African forces in South-West and East Africa reflected the factor of Dominion expansionism in British policy and the particular problem of South Africa in British Imperial politics. As Lord Methuen, High Commissioner of South Africa, had pointed out in December, 1908, when the developing defensive attitude towards Germany was being applied to the African situation as well as the European,

. . . nothing would create a worse impression than sitting still on the defensive. On the contrary we should strengthen our position immensely by a forward move, turning Germany out of a country she had never any right to occupy.⁴⁵

"Nothing," he later wrote, "would be able to keep a government of South Africa from taking the offensive against German South-West Africa," and it was "most important from a political and imperial point that they should not be allowed to do so without the co-operation of Imperial troops and above all of the Royal Navy."⁴⁶ In September, 1914, when South African troops did take the offensive against German South-West Africa, the serious rebellion which occurred showed that the British political hold on South Africa was still tenuous. It was thus essential to strengthen the hand of the pro-British Union Government by catering to expansionist

ambitions of the Union as a whole. "If German South-West Africa is occupied by the Union Government," Colonial Secretary Harcourt pointed out in a Cabinet memorandum in March, 1915, "it must obviously be retained as part of the British Empire."⁴⁷ A Colonial Office paper of 3 November, 1916, set forth a similar Imperial argument respecting East Africa.

The credit and reputation of General Botha and his Government have been staked, though it may be less obviously than in South-West Africa, on the conquest of East Africa, and a conquest followed by retrocession would be regarded by public opinion in South Africa as an expensive failure. . . .

His Majesty's Government must, in short, having invited the assistance of the Union, abide the result of their action. It is morally impossible for them to give up German East Africa without obtaining the consent of the Union, and that consent, it is safe to say, would only be given under the pressure of necessity.⁴⁸

Harcourt, Bonar Law -- who succeeded Harcourt in May -- and the Colonial Office assumed of course that the Allies would be successful in the struggle against German power in Europe and attached little importance to the colonial campaigns. Though apparent German dissatisfaction with the status quo outside Europe had much to do with the gradual development of the British policy of choosing sides against Germany in Europe, these campaigns -- apart from the attacks on wireless stations which affected the struggle for supremacy of the sea -- were considered subsidiary: as the War Office pointed out, they were carried out by local forces not necessarily

available for "the main theatre." Thus Harcourt's Memorandum of March, 1915, placed little emphasis on factors of broad strategy in the question of retaining German or Turkish territory. But as the war continued and the initial expectations in many quarters of a short campaign vanished, the intense defensive attitude towards Germany coloured more and more the interpretation of both past and future. The world-wide aspects of a long-term struggle for supremacy -- military, political and economic -- came more and more into the consciousness of British statesmen. As the war proceeded, Lord Curzon wrote,

. . . different views have been forced upon the Allied belligerents as regards Germany
 . . . we now realise how formidable a danger the German colonies, notably in Africa, might have been, had they been organised and equipped for war, and how very narrowly we escaped that peril, owing to their immature development⁴⁹

Certainly this view was shared by the C.I.D. subcommittee on territorial changes. "The German colonies," it concluded in its report of January, 1917, "have, from their acquisition to the beginning of the war, been used mainly as a means of assisting Germany to obtain a dominating position in the politics of the world;" the possession of these colonies had given her a title to interfere in local quarrels throughout the world; and her colonial harbours had been both bases from which German ships could threaten the commerce of other nations and the excuse to the German people for the large expenditure on her navy.⁵⁰ The March,

1917, report of this committee concluded that it was clearly undesirable that Germany should again be able to use her colonial possessions in Africa against the British Empire "in the conceivable event of another war."⁵¹

The problem was, however, that the longer the war lasted and the more formidable German power in Europe was shown to be, the greater was the feeling that German power had to be reduced on a world-wide basis. Yet should Germany's strategic position in Europe prove invincible -- or Britain's island position prove more susceptible to economic warfare than Germany's continental one -- and abandonment of the goal of victory become necessary, such an attitude toward Germany's colonies would become a barrier to a settlement, as Germany struggled longer the more she stood to lose.⁵² The German colonies would then become major factors in the continuation of the war. But up to the late autumn of 1916, after the failure of the massive frontal assault to break German power in the West, there was generally very little serious consideration of a compromise peace. There was no attempt, for instance, to draw up a list of priorities in territorial acquisitions at German expense. According to Harcourt's paper in March, 1915, for instance, German South-West Africa "must . . . be retained," for that involved a grave question of Imperial politics; it was also "essential" that the British should have Mount Cameroon, for that would "make a perfect sanitorium for the whole of West Africa."⁵³

In the meantime there was still the necessary task of maintaining the political structure upon which Britain relied so heavily to counter-act German strength in Europe, in Grey's view the first object of British diplomacy.⁵⁴ This object was complicated by the need for new arrangements concerning the zones of British and French control in Africa in view of the collapse of German power there. In August, 1914, British policy was to seek a general delay of permanent territorial arrangements until the end of the war. On the 23rd, the day Japan entered the war, Eyre Crowe wrote to the Colonial Office on the idea of getting Allied adhesion to "the principle that no captured territory shall be claimed by any individual Power as its own possession until the conclusion of peace."⁵⁵ For West Africa, the only region of Africa where both French and British forces operated, Grey tried unsuccessfully to avoid even a provisional settlement which separated areas administered by French and British detachments, preferring that both flags be flown in the whole conquered area and that there be one General in Command of the whole campaign, the General in Command instituting a military administration until the war were over. The alternative of temporary partition "would . . . in Sir E. Grey's opinion, inevitably tend to become permanent, whatever agreements as to its temporary nature might have been made in advance."⁵⁶

This was in fact the eventual situation. The ultimate fate of these areas in West Africa was determined largely

by the arrangements made over temporary occupation; and in these arrangements a lack of major British interests and an awareness of dependence upon France led to a British policy of concession and to relative ease of agreement -- as had been the case in the settlement in East Africa in 1885-1886, when Britain was dependent upon Germany in her struggle for strategic advantage against both France and Russia.⁵⁷ In Togoland there was a provisional administrative partition on 31 August, 1914, which, with the refinements of December, 1916, became the permanent division at the end of the war.⁵⁸ Though the French forces played a very small part in the Togoland campaign, the provisional administrative arrangement allotted to them twice the area which the British administered.⁵⁹ In the Cameroons the British tried in 1915 to get the French to agree to an approximately half-and-half partition.⁶⁰ But such an arrangement would have meant that Duala, because of its position, would fall to the British; and, in the words of the Colonial Office, "they no doubt felt (as we now feel) that no matter how 'provisional' the partition was called, the holders of Duala would probably remain there."⁶¹ Though the British had held that town originally, an exchange of notes on 3 and 4 March, 1916, left the French in control of Duala and about nine-tenths of the land area of the Cameroons, which meant almost complete acceptance of the demands first put

forward by the French at the end of the military campaign when negotiations began.⁶²

Except for two minor points Grey had unofficially agreed to the French claims in the Cameroons on 24 February. Cambon had argued that the French needed Duala as an outlet and the French colonial party was "very excited" about the recent British decision to undertake large scale operations in East Africa without saying anything to them. British colonial feeling, Grey replied, "was equally excited about Duala, which apparently was the only port of the Cameroons;" but when he had discussed the matter with the Prime Minister and his colleagues, they had concluded that they "ought to accept with as little qualification as possible the French proposals about the Cameroons." The reason, he told Cambon, was the fact that the South African Union was already in possession of German South-West Africa.⁶³ More to the point, however, were Grey's words to the War Committee a week earlier: France and Russia, he pointed out, "are not dependent upon the issue of the war to the same extent as we are, because they could get tolerable terms if the war was not continued."⁶⁴

This West African settlement with France did not in fact pose a major threat to Grey's broad policy of agreement with France and Russia for the sake of defense against Germany. The same could be said of the Pacific, where there was potential conflict between Britain's

policy of cooperation with Japan and local forces of Imperial expansion. These forces were of little consequence in the eventual policy. In March, 1915, Harcourt had expressed fear that perpetuation of the provisional partition of August, 1914, would "cause great trouble with Australia especially as regards the Marshall Island, the trade of which has been, even under German rule, exclusively with Australia."⁶⁵ But opposing this and other local factors -- such as general mistrust of Japan in Australia -- there was the factor pointed out in an Admiralty memorandum of January, 1917:

For the maintenance of our position in the China Seas it is of very great importance to continue our friendly relations with Japan and that, if possible, the Alliance should be renewed. It is therefore essential to meet her wishes in a friendly spirit.⁶⁶

In response to a London enquiry, Prime Minister Hughes of Australia gave the assurance in February that Australia would not object to Japan's occupancy of islands in the Pacific north of the equator and would "carefully abstain from saying or doing anything likely to strain or make difficult the relations between His Majesty's Government and Japan either in regard to the future partition of the Pacific or in regard to trade or any other matter."⁶⁷

III. THE MIDDLE EAST

In the Middle East the situation was more complex, There were more than two Great Powers involved, and before

the war this area was controlled not by a strong power, as was the case for the German colonies, but by a weak Ottoman government at Constantinople and an even weaker Persian Government at Tehran. Thus, whereas the political and economic situation in the German colonies was relatively fixed in the international context, the Middle East up to the eve of the war had long been subject to Great Power political and economic expansion, conflict and negotiation.⁶⁸ The war meant merely the acceleration of a long-standing process. The major new factors were the decisions for the elimination of Germany from the whole area of the Ottoman Empire and for the removal of Turkish power from Europe and the Arab regions. The British policy towards Turkey was merely an extension of policy towards Germany for, by engaging in hostilities against the Allies, Turkey appeared as merely an extension of German power, and Britain now abandoned the traditional policy of maintaining her. This, however, raised serious questions amongst the Allies.

As with the German colonies, British war aims in the Middle East were not causes of the coming of war with Turkey or of the continuation of the war in general in 1914-1916. The early development of these aims in the thinking of the Government in London and its satellites in Basra, Simla, Khartoum and Cairo was mainly an effect of the defensive policy towards Germany. In the first months of the war with Turkey there was no general "war aims" policy with respect to the Middle East. There was

the idea that Turkish power should cease in the Arab regions, and this general policy was declared publicly and privately at the beginning of the war with Turkey. But little was done to arrive at a conclusion as to what should replace this Turkish power. Though the idea of an independent Arab State was early mooted -- mainly as a means of appeasing Moslem public opinion in India and enticing the Arabs to revolt and thus weaken Turkey -- this was not a long-term answer, for there was in fact no Arab power at the time. "People talk of the Arabs as if they were some cohesive body well armed and equipped," Nicolson wrote to Hardinge in February, 1916, "instead of a heap of scattered tribes with no cohesion and no organization."⁶⁹ If the Arabs therefore required, in Nicolson's phrase, "some stiffening," the question remained as to who would provide it -- both during and after the war.⁷⁰ British policy on this question of the new distribution of power in Asiatic Turkey after the war -- as with the German colonies - was to try to put off settlement till the end of the war, in order to prevent dispute amongst the Allies. From the start of war with Turkey, however, the immediate policy of defence against the Turkish-German threat to the British imperial position, led to de facto British expansion in the South; in the North the attempt to defeat Germany in Europe through Turkey led to the probability of Constantinople itself coming under predominantly British control. These factors meant a need to reach

agreement with the Allies. It was this need that led to the formulation of war aims for the British Empire, which otherwise would have just grown haphazardly during the war, as it always had.

The decision for war with Turkey, though leading to immediate steps against threats to British Imperial security, was part of the policy of collaborating with Russia and France in foreign policy. Before Turkey undertook blatantly hostile action against the Russian ports in the Black Sea, British policy had been directed to maintaining Turkish neutrality: so much so that London resisted the idea of jeopardizing that policy by guarding against increased Turkish activity in the British sphere of Arab influence, despite a belief in the "complete control exercised by Germany" in Constantinople.⁷¹ "I entirely share your anxiety," Grey wired Mallet on 11 October,

. . . that His Majesty's Government should avoid giving just, or even plausible, cause of offence to Turkey, as our attitude during the past eight weeks has abundantly proved, but it would be equally fatal to give way to Turkish demands beyond a certain point, especially in the Persian Gulf.⁷²

In the Persian Gulf British policy was to resist the demands for the removal of their warships from the Shatt-el-Arab, on the grounds that the "Goeben" and "Breslau" were still German warships in Turkish territorial waters. Grey felt, however, "that the key of the situation is in Constantinople."⁷³ A somewhat similar view was shown the

previous day when Grey had instructed Mallet concerning an answer to Seyyid Talib of Basra, who wished Grey "to remind Lord Kitchener of a conversation with him in Cairo three years ago, and to say that the time has come." The British Government, the Basra consul should say, considered that the best interests of all Mohomedans were safeguarded by the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire. "They have consequently preferred to wait until Turkey can emancipate herself from her evil genius, i.e. Germany." Talib should bear in mind that war was only inevitable if the Turks insisted on precipitating it, and "His Majesty's Government are still unwilling to believe that Turkey will allow herself to be jockeyed by Germany into so gigantic a folly" -- an attitude similar to that taken by Grey on the question of German precipitation of war, both in 1906 and 1914.⁷⁴

War with Turkey would of course involve the dispersement of Allied energies from the critical defensive struggles on the Western and Eastern fronts in Europe. But the attempt to maintain peace with Turkey also served the cause of good relations with the Allies. As Mallet pointed out on 3 September, "it would be most undesirable to raise the question of the partition of Turkey at the present juncture."⁷⁵ That war between the Allies and Turkey would indeed raise such a question was indicated by St. Petersburg in September. The attitude of Turkey since the war began, Buchanan reported on the 25th,

was attracting the attention of the Russian Government and public more than ever to the question of the Dardanelles. Krivoschein, "the most influential member of the Government," in Buchanan's opinion, told the Ambassador that he personally would be glad if the Turks declared war on Russia, "as then the Turkish question would be finally settled."

Opinion seems to be gaining ground that it can be only at the expense of Turkey that Russia can obtain any material advantage as the result of the war, for it is not regarded as adding to her strength that she should acquire territory on her western frontier in Posen and Galicia.

Sazonov's references to the Dardanelles question, Buchanan stated, "left the impression that the Russians will insist on settling this question once and for all, though they will not raise the question of the status of Constantinople."⁷⁶

On 29 October Turkey undertook overtly hostile action against Russia in the Black Sea, and the need to conform her policy to that of Russia brought Britain into the war. "As His Majesty's Government wish to make their attitude towards Turkey conform to that of Russia," Grey cabled to Mallet, "I should be glad to learn as soon as possible whether Russian Government are withdrawing their Ambassador from Constantinople, and what steps they intend taking."⁷⁷ And the following day Mallet's instructions were merely that he should adapt his attitude to that of his French and Russian colleagues.⁷⁸ As the Russian Ambassador asked for his passports, Mallet followed and the Russian declaration of war was followed by similar declarations

by the French and British.⁷⁹ Even before these the British Government had enacted their contingency plans for the forcible seizure of Turkish territory at Akaba and Fao.⁸⁰

The coming of war with Turkey meant that the British Government had to settle with Russia the eventual fate of the Turkish Empire. Sazonov, "somewhat perturbed" himself at Turkish action, repeated to Buchanan on the 29th his belief that the war would be welcomed by a large section of the Russian public. Turkish action, he said, would entail final settlement of the question of the Straits and "would unroll the whole Eastern question."⁸¹ On 2 November the Russian attitude was made public when an Imperial manifesto stated that Turkey's interference in the war would "only hasten for her the destined course of events, and open way for Russia to settle the historic problems on the shores of the Black Sea handed down to her by her ancestors."⁸² Asquith's public statement on Turkey on 9 November went one step further, however, preparing the way for a policy of general partition. By drawing the sword, Asquith declared, the Ottoman Government "have rung the death-knell of Ottoman dominion not only in Europe, but in Asia."⁸³ Five days later Buchanan informed Sazonov that in Grey's opinion Turkish conduct had rendered inevitable "a complete settlement of the Turkish question," of which the Straits question was but a part.⁸⁴ Indeed, one step towards such a "complete settlement" had already been taken unilaterally by the British Government.

By an Order in Council of 5 November, the island of Cyprus, still legally part of the Turkish Empire though controlled by Britain since 1878, "was annexed to and became part of His Majesty's Dominions."⁸⁵ This move, "not well regarded" by the Allies according to Lord Crewe, was nevertheless followed on 18 December by the declaration of a British protectorate over Egypt.⁸⁶

Such unilateral expansion of the British Empire at the expense of Turkey in fact set the pace for the general diplomatic developments in the Middle East. These moves in Cyprus and Egypt, taken largely for reasons of local control, were merely key points in a long process of British expansion in the Middle East which was accelerated by the war. In the previous century Imperial strategic interests had led to both the pursuit of a buffer policy in Turkey and Persia and the establishment of strong British influence in specific areas of these Empires, notably in the Persian Gulf and in Egypt. On the British presence in the Persian Gulf an Indian Government official commented in April, 1915, "we have 100 years of solid work behind us with the result that the whole Arab littoral . . . is inclined to favour us."⁸⁷ Some of the results of this work was clearly in evidence at the start of the war. "We have already received loyal offers of co-operation from the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammerah," the Viceroy stated on 4 September, "and we are assured that we could depend generally on a friendly or at all events correct

attitude towards British interests on part of other Arab potentates of the Gulf including Sultan of Muscat."⁸⁸

Bin Saud, powerful ruler of east-central Arabia, gave the assurance in December that he was "entirely on British side."⁸⁹ To further consolidate this relationship and acquire active co-operation, Hardinge had suggested in September that in return for co-operation from Bin Saud the British "should undertake to recognise and enter into treaty relations with him as independent ruler of Nejd and Hassa, and guarantee him against attack by sea" -- essentially the protectorate policy which was applied to Egypt in December, though Bin Saud was already an independent ruler who had been fighting the Turks intermittently for ten years, even conquering the Turkish province of Hassa in May, 1914.⁹⁰ The consequent negotiations with Bin Saud were not completed until the end of 1915. Like the Egyptian protectorate, this arrangement meant a definite consolidation of British power in the Middle East.

The work in Persia itself before the war to build up a strong state on this "outlying portion of the defences of India" was less successful. "Persia," the same official had written at the end of 1912, "is worse than at any time in my memory; we have failed to improve matters, although we have spent a great deal of money and made many enemies."⁹¹ With the coming of the war there came the danger that German and Turkish political agents and military forces might make more enemies for British power -- not only in

Persia but also in the Arab regions where British influence was strong. The consequent need to defend the British position led to the use of force and the attempt to detach other Arab groups still within the Turkish sphere. As Kitchener had commented in early September, "All depends on how Turkey acts If Turkey breaks out action in Arabia under our auspices would naturally follow."⁹² After Turkey did "break out" Grey instructed Cairo that the Arab movement "should be encouraged in every way possible." As part of this encouragement to the Arab movement Grey supported the idea of financing and sending to Mesopotamia the Arab revolutionary Aziz Bey el Masri, who in August, as representative of a Central Committee at Baghdad, had sounded Cairo on the attitude of the British Government towards their idea of a united Arabian state, "independent of Turkey and every other Power except England, whose tutelage and control of foreign policy they invited."⁹³

The initial momentum in British military and political expansion in Mesopotamia came, however, not from Cairo or London but from India, and was based on fears of the loss of the British position in the Gulf, rather than such a general scheme. The military move taken by the British in the Gulf had been envisioned by the Viceroy in his telegram of 4 September, 1914, which presented a general survey of the best means to protect British interests in the Persian Gulf as well as Western Arabia in the event of war with Turkey, Assumption of British control at Basra,

he stated, "would, of course, be the most effective and far-reaching measure possible" as regards the political situation in the Persian Gulf, though the practicality of this move would depend on troops available.⁹⁴ It was in fact decided at first that Indian troops could not be spared -- though the Admiralty objected to this attitude of the Government of India and the India Office, arguing that control of Lower Mesopotamia, as well as bringing Britain economic benefits, would strike a blow at Turkey and thwart the ambition of Germany, who "has devoted an enormous amount of money and energy to consolidating her interests in this part of the world, and . . . has systematically endeavoured by every means in her power to oust British and Indian interests."⁹⁵ By the end of September, however, reports of "a very serious and threatening state of affairs at Baghdad and Basra" brought the fear that British and Indian interests would indeed be ousted.⁹⁶ Prompted by Indian authorities, who were "seriously alarmed at the effect made on the Arabs by our absolute inactivity in the face of Turkish provocations and warlike preparations," the Government decided to divert to the Persian Gulf a brigade of the 6th Division of the Indian Army originally intended for Egypt, "ostensibly for the protection of the Admiralty oil-pipe-line which is threatened by the hostile action of Turkey and the assembly of Turkish forces at Basrah."⁹⁷ When the war began this force seized Fao and proceeded to the capture of Basra. In order to keep

the Arabs on the British side, the Viceroy explained shortly before the completion of this task, it was important, as regards Turkey, to back force by force.⁹⁸

The need for force in Mesopotamia did not cease, however, with the capture of Basra on 22 November, 1914, and the same factors which brought the British to the Turkish town of Basra, together with local strategic considerations, led to a gradual expansion of the initial bridgehead. Passive inactivity was to be deprecated, the Military Secretary of the India Office argued on the 27th, "if we are to continue to impress the Arab and Indian world with our ability to defeat all designs against us." He therefore advocated an advance to Kurna, sixty miles upstream from Basra -- "to secure a strong strategical point and a dominating position."⁹⁹ When the Government sanctioned this move upstream, General Barrett was instructed to bear in mind the political purpose which the campaign served. "The necessity of conciliating Arabs in every way should be impressed on Barrett," Crewe instructed the Viceroy, "and, if possible, Basra should be considered as a friendly and not a hostile town. . . ."¹⁰⁰ The Viceroy, moreover, was to bear in mind the broader political considerations involved in this British expansion: the Government was not disposed to authorise an advance to Baghdad at this time, "as there are grave international considerations involved."¹⁰¹ Such concern did not, however, prevent the British from consolidating their military and political

position in the whole of Basra province. In April, 1915, when Lt. Gen. Nixon relieved Barrett as commander of the British forces in Mesopotamia, he was instructed "to retain complete control of the lower portions of Mesopotamia comprising the Basra Vilayets and all the outlets to the sea and such portions of the neighbouring territories as may affect your operations."¹⁰² Accordingly the British force captured Amara on the Tigris in June and Nasiriya on the Euphrates in July; and on 23 August, Nixon instructed Maj. Gen. Townshend to advance another 150 miles up the Tigris, just beyond the limits of Basra province and occupy the town of Kut-al-Amara, which was to be an advanced post.¹⁰³

But in the long run the international considerations were outweighed by the local political and military forces for a further advance to Baghdad. As control of Basra had been a key factor in general political control in the Persian Gulf, so capture of Baghdad came to be considered the key to the situation in South Persia, as well as an important factor in improving the British political position throughout the Middle East and India. "The capture of Baghdad," Hardinge wrote in the summer of 1915,

. . . would from our point of view and that of Persia and Afghanistan, have a far greater effect than the capture of the Straits and Constantinople, and I am sure that it will have to be done.

This was particularly important in view of British inability to force the Dardanelles and the activity of the Germans

and Austrians who, as Hardinge complained in September, were "wandering about Persia with rifles and machine guns."¹⁰⁴ The capture of Baghdad, he later pointed out, would deprive them of their base.¹⁰⁵

After the check at Ctesiphon British policy was to remain on the defensive throughout 1916.¹⁰⁶ The military disaster at Kut in April, however, made it even more important for general political considerations both in the Orient and Britain that Baghdad be captured as soon as possible. Moreover, by January, 1917, when the decision for an advance on Baghdad was taken, there was a relatively new factor in British policy -- the idea that the British ought to improve their position as much as possible in the East in case of the eventual necessity of ending the war by negotiation with an undefeated Germany. As a War Office paper of January, 1917, explained, a peace which left Germany in possession of the road to the East would be disastrous for the security of the Eastern Empire of Great Britain. Though the only truly effective means of closing the road to the East to Germany -- the capture of Constantinople or the cutting of the communication between Turkey and the Central Powers by an offensive from Salonika -- were out of the question because of the shortage of shipping and the possession by Germany of interior lines of communication, "it might . . . be possible to limit Germany's progress east of Constantinople."

If it seemed that decisive victory in the West would not be possible,

. . . our best course of action would seem to be to undertake operations with the object of obtaining a position which would ensure better terms for the Entente Powers as regards their spheres of influence in Asiatic Turkey and would restrict as far as possible Germany's progress in the East.¹⁰⁷

In the meantime, the de facto British expansion in Mesopotamia, like the expansion in Africa, had already created forces for the retention of the conquered areas in the peace settlement at the end of the war, generally based on the same arguments which brought the initial British presence. On 5 December, 1914, India raised the question of a declaration of permanent annexation for local political reasons. Grey opposed such a move, as "it makes the French and Russians very sensitive and is contrary to the useful principle of provisional occupation pending final settlement in terms of peace."¹⁰⁸ Though Crewe instructed Hardinge accordingly, the Viceroy persisted.¹⁰⁹ On 19 December he requested permission to authorize Sir Percy Cox to let it be understood, though only in conversation, that where the British assumed control with co-operation of the inhabitants, "whether we remain or not, they will in any case not be handed back to mercies of Turks."

This is what the people fear, and before declaration of war His Majesty's Government did not object to our reassuring Koweit, Mohammerah and notables of Basrah on that

score. Moreover, it is in accordance with policy adumbrated in Prime Minister's speech (of 9 November).¹¹⁰

Haldane, in charge of the Foreign Office in Grey's absence, agreed with Lord Crewe that the milder proposal should be approved.¹¹¹ At Basra and Simla, however, the establishment of the British presence on a more permanent basis was considered only a matter of time. In April, 1915, for instance, Arnold Wilson, assistant to Cox at Basra, wrote matter-of-factly of the prospects of "a great Arab population living peacefully under our rule" in Mesopotamia and not requiring a large garrison.¹¹² And in August, 1915, when asked for his opinion on British desiderata in Turkey, Hardinge answered that from the Indian point of view he would be satisfied with "any system by which we may be assured of a friendly administration of Baghdad, under British control of some kind, which will not create difficulties for us at Basrah."¹¹³

The expansion of British power from India as a result of the war was matched by a similar pattern of expansion from Egypt which resulted in extensive ambitions in certain quarters and posed a more serious threat to Grey's broad political policy. In contrast to Indian expansion there was no establishment of new military frontiers for Egypt in 1914 and 1915. The technical frontier of Egypt across the Sinai Desert remained undefended and British defensive policy was confined to strengthening the Suez Canal fortifications and increasing

troop strength in Egypt, for local control as well as external defence. There was however an immediate attempt to weaken Turkey and protect Egypt by extending the Egyptian sphere of Arab influence, a policy which conflicted with Indian Arab policy, both in Mesopotamia and the Hedjaz, and necessitated a delimitation of Indian and Egyptian Arab zones.¹¹⁴

Cairo's expansionist ambitions centred on the Sherif of Mecca, whose position as custodian of the Holy Places made him a much more significant figure in British policy than his actual political influence warranted. Thus on 31 October, 1914, Kitchener's attempt to gain the assistance of Mecca included the hint that the Sherif might replace the Sultan of Turkey as Caliph. The message also hinted at the idea of a role for the Sherif in Britain's general Arab policy. Whereas Mecca had suggested protection for "the Emir" as part of "closer union" with Britain, Kitchener proposed assistance to "the Arabs" against external aggression in return for assistance from "the Arab Nation" in the war with Turkey.¹¹⁵ The bait was not sufficient at the time, however. A message from Mecca in December indicated that it was impossible for the Sherif to break with the Turks at that time because of his position in the world of Islam and the present political situation in the Hedjaz.¹¹⁶ In July, 1915, however, the Sherif responded, offering "military assistance" to the British in return for British support for an independent state

of Arabia, extending from the edge of Anatolia to the Indian Ocean and from the Persian frontier to the Red and Mediterranean Seas.¹¹⁷

The delay that followed involved largely the problem of conflict between Britain's Arab policy and the interests of the French.¹¹⁸ McMahon, Egyptian High Commissioner, who played a leading role in the negotiations with Sherif Hussein, replied to Mecca on 24 October, 1915, after three months' delay in discussion of the frontier question, that the British would recognise and support Arab independence in the proposed territories but with exceptions dictated by concern for the interests of France. Specifically excluded were the districts of Mersina and Alexandretta, as well as Syria west of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo. There was moreover the general proviso limiting the area in which Britain would recognise and support "the independence of the Arabs" to "those areas in which Great Britain has freedom of action without encroaching upon French interests."¹¹⁹ Though the Sherif agreed on 5 November to the exclusion of Mersina and Adana from the designated area of Arab independence, it was not until 1 January, 1916, that he agreed, for the sake of Anglo-French relations, not to insist upon his claims to the Lebanon. He pointed out, however, that he would assert claims to this area at the end of the war. The British answer that the Government intended to continue Anglo-French friendship after the war was in fact the last word in the negotiations before

the Arab rebellion began in June, 1916, and the North-West frontier of the Arab State was left unsettled.¹²⁰

In the meantime fears of "(the) danger we will incur in restricting measures for meeting Turco-German menace to (the) defence of Egypt itself," added to political considerations, led to an extension of the military frontier in 1916.¹²¹ The Turkish attack on the Canal in February had shown the Sinai desert to be an inadequate guard against the threat to Egypt, and early in 1916 General Murray began a methodical advance across the desert to El Arish. From a military point of view, this advance was to serve, in the words of the General Staff, "to cover the easiest line of approach to the canal and by controlling the chief water supply of the Sinai Peninsula, to defend Egypt in the most economical way." Politically, the advance was to enable the British "to get into touch with, and rouse the discontented Arabs in Syria and encourage them to make common cause with the Sherif," and "to be in a position to assist the Sherif by cutting the Hedjaz railway."¹²²

El Arish was taken in December, 1916. Similar arguments, enforced by the hope that such a move might produce "far reaching results," then led to plans for a further advance. A move into Syria was essential, Murray pointed out to Robertson on 13 December, "in order to keep as large an enemy force as possible employed in this theatre, thereby affording both direct and indirect

relief to the Sherif in his operations in the Hedjaz."¹²³ To this argument Robertson added more general strategic and political arguments. The object of an advance on Jerusalem, he pointed out, was to obtain a success when operations on "the main fronts" were at a standstill, thereby reducing the effect of the recent German victories in Roumania and raising British prestige, particularly in the East; to prevent the despatch of more Turkish troops to Europe; and to draw troops from Armenia, "thus improving the prospects of a Russian Spring offensive in that district and contributing to a possible collapse of the Turkish military power in Asia."¹²⁴

But such defensive measures again raised dangers for the Anglo-French Alliance. In the War Office, where the need for the support of France against Germany had been emphasized long before the war, there was still an awareness of the need to avoid conflict with French interests. Though the idea of getting in touch with the Syrian Arabs had much to recommend it from a military point of view, the Director of Military Operations pointed out on 8 November, 1916, after Murray had raised the question, action upon such a plan would depend on "whether the French Government are likely to raise any objections to such a measure."¹²⁵ Egypt, on the other hand, had less interest in the broad political basis of British security. "France would be a better neighbour (for Egypt) than Russia," Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary in Cairo,

observed in December, 1914, "but we cannot count on the permanence of any Entente, however Cordiale, when the generation that is full of war memories passes away."¹²⁶

McMahon showed similar interest in the idea of permanent Egyptian expansion as a by-product of the war effort, even at the expense of French interests. The British, he argued in February, 1915, should attack and occupy Alexandretta.

Our interests as regards the forces attacking both Egypt and Baghdad would justify our occupying that front, and once in, we might remain there. Its possession would appear to ensure the settlement of the Syrian question to our advantage in due course of time.¹²⁷

Sir Edward Grey, however, was more concerned with the present problems of British security than those of the next generation. On 8 March, 1915, when Storrs was dreaming of a suitable Empire for Lord Kitchener to rule -- "a North African or Near Eastern Vice-Royalty including Egypt and the Sudan and across the way from Aden to Alexandretta" -- a dampening telegram arrived from the Foreign Secretary. Any Syrian aspirations for Britain or Egypt, it pointed out, "would mean a break with France and are therefore unthinkable."¹²⁸

It was, however, the prospect of British defensive measures leading to a break with Russia that began the process of general settlement of the Middle Eastern question, in which considerations of grand policy led to much greater sacrifice than the abandonment of marginal

Syrian interests. The Anglo-French attack at the Dardanelles was largely the result of the deadlock in Europe at the end of 1914, rather than factors of Imperial defence, as was the case for the British expansion from Egypt and the Persian Gulf. As a War Office memorandum of May, 1915, explained,

There appeared very little prospect of any decisive success in Flanders. Turkey was the weakest point in the hostile combination and at the Dardanelles our naval forces could be brought to bear in conjunction, if necessary, with our military forces at one of the most strategical points in the world.

A successful operation at the Dardanelles would politically turn the flank on the Austro-German coalition by influencing Italy and the Balkan States, knocking Turkey out of the war -- thus releasing Russian troops in the Caucasus and Anglo-Indian forces in Egypt and Mesopotamia -- and enabling a subsequent campaign up the Danube which could detach Hungary from the Central Powers. It would strengthen Russia logistically and economically by making possible the export of the Russian harvest of 1914 and the import of munitions. Finally, a point which gained greater importance later in the war, Allied control of the Straits would serve "to end, once and for all, the German 'Drang nach dem Osten'."¹²⁹

On 19 February, with the naval bombardment of the fortresses, the attack on the Dardanelles began. Its immediate objective was to gain an entrance to the Sea of Marmora "with the view of ultimately gaining possession

of the Bosphorus and overawing Constantinople."¹³⁰ The prospect of such de facto British control of the Straits had a predictable reaction in St. Petersburg, where the question of the Straits had been a primary cause of that interest in the Balkans which had brought Russia into the war. "The course of recent events," announced the Russian circular of 4 March, 1915, "has led His Majesty the Emperor Nicholas to consider that the question of Constantinople and the Straits should be definitely solved in accordance with the long-standing aspirations of Russia." These "long-standing aspirations", which went beyond those raised in the negotiations in November, involved incorporation in the Russian Empire of territory on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, the islands of the Sea of Marmora, the Aegean Sea islands of Imbros and Tenidos, and the territory between the western side of the Straits and of the Sea of Marmora and the Enos-Midia line in Southern Thrace, including the city of Constantinople.¹³¹ This Russian démarche forced the French and British in turn to formulate their desiderata with regard to the Turkish Empire. As Harcourt laconically remarked, "We seem to be forced by the possible capture of Constantinople into a premature division of the yet unacquired spoils of the whole war."¹³²

At the War Council meeting of 10 March the policy of acceding to Russian wishes was not seriously questioned; the main query, Asquith wrote, was "what we are to demand

in return."¹³³ Only the French Government put up a temporary resistance to the Russian claims. On 7 March Bertie reported Delcassé's view of "how ill advised and exaggerated they have become." Nevertheless the Foreign Minister was "rather apprehensive lest Russia unless humoured to a certain extent should be fractious."¹³⁴ On the 10th he stated to Bertie that he stood by Grey's formula of November, 1914, whereby Russia should receive all Turkish territory in Europe below the Enos-Midia line with the exception of Constantinople. But again he showed apprehension about the Alliance. "The essential thing," he admitted,

. . . was not to fall out (se brouiller) with Russian and possible dispose her to come to terms with Germany which German Emperor by every kind of offer was endeavouring to do.¹³⁵

By the following day Bertie felt sure from the nature of Delcassé's talk, which had softened greatly towards Russian claims, that he had been "threatened and frightened by Monsieur Izvolsky." Bertie therefore advised Grey that "the all important matter was to finish the war victoriously and not to run any risk of estranging Russia and throwing her into the arms of Germany."¹³⁶ As Grey had already successfully used the same argument in the War Council, the British Government, in an aide-memoire of 11 March, acceded completely to the Russian claim.¹³⁷ This concession, Grey pointed out to Buchanan as an observation to be made to Sazonov, "involves the complete abandonment of what has been our traditional

policy, and runs counter to opinions and sentiments once universal and still by no means extinct in this country." It was given, Grey added, "in the hope and belief that the settlement proposed will, when realised, make lasting friendship between the two countries."¹³⁸

Such a belief did not however prevent the British Government from seeking compensation for this Russian gain of "the greatest prize of the whole war." In the War Council there was no definite decision as to specific compensation, the main decision at this time regarding British war aims being the establishment of a committee on British desiderata in Asiatic Turkey.¹³⁹ The British Note of 11 March therefore only presented the general stipulation that British agreement to the Russian claim was "subject to the war being brought to a successful conclusion and to the desiderata of Great Britain and France in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere being realised, as indicated in the Russian communication."¹⁴⁰ But Grey did instruct Buchanan to make specific verbal stipulations, including commercial freedom of the Straits for merchant vessels, a free port at Constantinople for goods in transit to and from territory other than Russian territory, and for the addition of the neutral area to the British sphere of Persia.¹⁴¹ The Persian question, Buchanan told the Emperor on 13 March, "had on several occasions given rise to friction between the two Governments," and incorporation of the neutral area in the British zone

"would mark a great step towards a final and friendly settlement of the Persian question." "Russia and Great Britain would after the war be the most powerful Empires in the world," he added,

. . .and with settlement of the Persian question last cause of friction between them would disappear and the world's peace be assured. The Emperor cordially agreed, saying that their lasting friendship would be best guarantee of peace.¹⁴²

As to the Ottoman Empire as a whole, Grey had pointed out to Buchanan in his instructions on 11 March that he could not formulate British desiderata except in consultation with the French as well as the Russian Government, "and it is clear that the whole question of ulterior British and French interests, in what is now Asiatic Turkey, must come under consideration." But whenever it became known that Russia was to have Constantinople,

I shall want to state that His Majesty's Government have throughout all the negotiations stipulated that in all circumstances Arabia and the Mussulman Holy Places shall remain under independent Mussulman rule.¹⁴³

Grey's policy, however, was to delay these further consultations with the French and Russians on the details of the respective desiderata. He pointed out to Buchanan on 19 March that until the point of the boundaries of the Moslem State had been decided, "it seems premature to discuss the possible division of Syria, Mesopotamia, or neighbouring regions amongst other Powers."¹⁴⁴ On 22

March, when it appeared that Sazonov wished to work with Britain -- or have the British Government take the lead -- in limiting French claims in Syria, Grey informed Buchanan, "I do not want to raise the question with the French Government."¹⁴⁵ The following day, however, this plan for delay of discussion was thwarted. The French Foreign Minister, Cambon told Grey,

. . . had observed that, as the question of Constantinople and the Straits, which was the Chief question affecting Russia had now been disposed of, it was rather for France and Great Britain to discuss other questions respecting Asia Minor.

Delcassé had therefore suggested unofficial discussions, either verbally or in the form of private letter, on French and British desiderata. Once the question was thus raised Grey had no choice but to agree.¹⁴⁶

The consequence was the series of Middle East agreements between England, France, and Russia in 1916, based on the idea that, as Mark Sykes subsequently pointed out in a War Office memorandum of June, 1916, "the solidity of the Alliance must take precedence of any other political considerations."¹⁴⁷ The Anglo-French negotiations were completed early in 1916.¹⁴⁸ Though France had little prospect of playing a large role, military or political, in the overthrow of Turkish power in the Arab regions, this agreement gave France the right "to establish such direct or indirect administration or control as they desire" in an area of the former Ottoman Empire including the Mediterranean coast from a point north of Acre to Mersina,

and the Taurus Mountains area across to Diarbekr. She also had "priority of right of enterprise and local loans" and the exclusive right to supply advisers or foreign functionaries at the request of the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States in a much larger area, including Damascus and Mosul.¹⁴⁹ As a War Office official commented in 1917, when the necessity of revision was being discussed, "the Agreement was ratified, for, presumably, sufficient reasons of general policy which made it worth while at that time to so favour France."¹⁵⁰

On 26 April, 1916, in an exchange of notes between France and Russia, the Russian Government agreed to the Anglo-French scheme for the establishment of an Arab State or Confederation of Arab States and the Anglo-French partition of Syria, Cilicia, and Mesopotamia, on condition that Russia be allowed to annex a large area of Armenia and Kurdistan.¹⁵¹ The Anglo-French agreement was then completed by an exchange of notes on 9 and 16 May.¹⁵² An exchange of notes between Benckendorff and Grey on 23 May and 1 September completed the general division of the Ottoman Empire between the three great Allies, leaving the Italian share of Turkey as the main item of settlement for 1917.¹⁵³

By the partition arrangement in the Middle East in 1916 the area where the British were allowed "to establish such direct or indirect administration or control as they desire" comprised Mesopotamia to a point north

of Baghdad; the northern boundary of the larger area of influence within the Arab State extended from a point on the Persian frontier northeast of Kerkuk to Palestine, and around the international zone in Palestine to Gaza on the Mediterranean coast.¹⁵⁴ Such a definition of a British zone in Asiatic Turkey did not however reflect definite conclusions by the British Government on policy in this area. "I never regarded this treaty as entailing any obligation on us," Grey wrote, "except to fulfil a promise to give the Arabs independence."

There was no obligation on us to occupy or administer Mesopotamia, but it was desirable to make sure that other European Powers would not push into Mesopotamia and down to the Persian Gulf.¹⁵⁵

In June, 1916, shortly after the completion of agreement with the French which often bears his name, Mark Sykes pointed out that the rising of the Sherif of Mecca which had just begun "brings us face to face with the necessity of adopting a definite policy with regard to the Arabs, and consideration of our contingent intentions in the Middle East."¹⁵⁶

Nor did the commitments on Asiatic Turkey necessarily have a fixed value in all quarters, especially if peace with Turkey became possible and politically advantageous. On 1 August, 1917, for instance, the D.M.I. wrote to the C.I.G.S. suggesting "scrapping the Sykes-Picot agreement . . . as an essential preliminary to the making of any terms." Though he did feel that it was essential to avoid falling

into a trap which "would involve us in difficulties with our Allies," he thought this danger could be avoided by renunciation of some of the British gains in Mesopotamia and a frank discussion with the Allies before negotiations with the Turks.

In any discussion with our Allies we must take a strong line. We are employing half a million men against Turkey while France and Italy are employing none. We are therefore the interested party and should enforce our point of view.¹⁵⁷

The willing concurrence of the other signatories was less important, of course, when Allies lost much of their value. Thus Lord Hardinge, Permanent Undersecretary of State in the Foreign Office at this time, wrote MacDonogh in November, 1917, ". . . we may safely conclude that we will not continue to fight Turkey in order to secure Italian claims for Italy."¹⁵⁸

Anticipation of that attitude adopted in certain quarters in 1917 and 1918 on the significance of the de facto power situation in a given area as a factor in the eventual settlement was of course the reason the Russians and French had sought agreements in the first place. And Grey's purpose in concurring was to prevent Allied disruption.¹⁵⁹ As Sykes commented, the exchanges of notes

clear the way for joint action whenever it may be desirable from a military point of view, as now each Power knows that the presence of troops of another Power in a given place has no more than a military significance.¹⁶⁰

CHAPTER III: COMPROMISE PEACE AND ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

"One of our greatest assets is the friendship of Great Britain, and our friendship is a still bigger asset for her, and she knows it and values it."

Walter H. Page, 22 October, 1914¹

Britain's pursuit of a policy of Victory over Germany also brought about conflict with the United States, not only because of one of the means of pursuing that policy -- economic warfare -- but also because of the policy itself, for American policy was to seek an end of the war through compromise peace, particularly by American mediation. Anglo-American conflict on the compromise peace question in 1914-1916 involved on the one hand the British idea of security through maintaining the Entente and thoroughly defeating Germany, in order to reduce her will and capacity for war; on the other the American idea of settlement by negotiation over specific war aims -- which in British thinking were merely aspects of the broad struggle. As an alternative to the idea of security through a balance of power the United States suggested a fundamental change in the nature of international politics -- the creation of a universal body to provide security and peace through enforced international law. But the British Government viewed this idea in terms of the traditional balance of power idea and believed that in such a body there had to be effective power to deter aggression by Germany if, in accordance with the American view, she were not decisively defeated. This meant American involvement in the post-war world as a counter-weight to Germany.

Partly because such involvement was not a likely prospect and partly because the defeat of Germany was still considered a prerequisite for such a new arrangement, Britain and her Allies chose to restore security by restoring the balance in Europe without the United States. A third choice for security was to continue to maintain armies and armaments on a near war-time basis -- for the stalemate in 1914-1917 meant that with massive mobilisation of British military potential and American financial and industrial support there was still a balance of power in Europe. But this was not a desirable prospect to liberal England, which tended to see the war not as an intensification of that struggle for existence which characterized all international politics, but as an aberration from a pattern of development towards greater international harmony. The defeat and conversion of a deliberately aggressive Germany -- seen as the only cause of this aberration, through her failure to play by the rules -- was therefore to be a step towards that ideal world where "the war drum throbbed no longer."² In this situation only loss of faith in the ultimate success of such a Victory policy would lead the British to abandon it in favour of one of negotiated peace.

The strategic significance of the war for the United States -- the idea that it was in the interests of American security that there be a balance of power across the Atlantic -- was not a factor in the thinking

of the vast majority of Americans. As regards the active political element outside the administration, there were a small number of politicians in the Republican Party -- Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Elihu Root, for example -- who were aware that American security and well-being was closely tied up with power developments abroad.³ But the general trend was a lack of awareness of considerations of power. As Willert, the Times Washington correspondent has pointed out, the general tendency was to see the war as "only another of those periodical clashes of rival nationalisms or imperialisms peculiar to the complicated politics of Europe."⁴ As late as autumn of 1916, according to Willert,

Even Theodore Roosevelt is as one declaiming to an almost empty theatre. All the applause he gets comes from a class of thinkers who might perhaps fill one row of stalls.⁵

Even within the administration there was a strong neutralist, pacifist tendency, especially in the person of William Jennings Bryan, the Secretary of State.

Of the "class of thinkers" which thought in terms of balance of power, the most influential was "Colonel" Edward House. As early as 19 August, 1914, House indicated that because of balance of power considerations, enforced by liberal bias against German militarism, he was choosing sides. Though an Allied victory might have the drawback of making Czarist Russia supreme upon the Continent, he wrote, a German victory would mean "the unspeakable tyranny

of militarism for generations to come," the abandonment of all hope of permanent peace and ultimately trouble for the United States.⁶ The trouble would be that once there was no longer a balance in Europe to provide security, she would have to provide security by her own armaments. The Americans, he wrote in July, 1915, when advocating greater expenditure on armaments, were "taking a terrible gamble in permitting our safety to rest almost wholly upon the success of the Allies."⁷ Similarly, though much influenced by the isolationist tradition in the United States and a moralistic, idealistic philosophy, President Wilson was not unaware that American security was dependent upon the preservation of a European balance and that great expenditure on armaments, as well as a compromise of principles of liberalism, would follow from the increased American insecurity caused by disruption of that balance.⁸ If Germany triumphed, Wilson stated a week after the start of the war, the United States would have to have conscription.⁹ Everything he loved most was at stake in the war, he told the British Ambassador on 3 September, 1914, and, if the Germans succeeded, "we shall be forced to take such measures of defence here as would be fatal to our form of Government and American ideals."¹⁰

American strategic interests did not, however, require the degree of victory which Britain sought -- one which would restore the Continental balance or kill the will to war in Germany so that Britain need not remain

a first class military power at the end of the war -- it was necessary only that the United States escape from this accelerating investment in national defence. Moreover, a great prolongation of the war meant positive danger for American interests. The war had harmful effects on American overseas trade, caused conflict with both belligerents, and brought danger that the United States might be drawn in. The ideal object of American policy was thus to exercise a moderating influence on both sides -- as Grey had wished Britain to do before her involvement in the war. In House's words of 4 December, 1914, the Americans "would not look with favour upon a policy that held nothing but complete annihilation of the enemy."¹¹

But the Americans would not use power to resolve the European conflict. Indeed, the American approach was based largely on the idea that the actual power situation was not important. In the words of William Wiseman, special British representative in Washington, Wilson first thought that

foiled in her first pounce for Victory,
Germany might be made to disgorge Belgium,
quit occupied France and retire behind her
own borders after which an alerted Europe
would be strong enough to keep her in check.¹²

This view, which House expressed to the British Ambassadors in December, 1914, was not, however, predominant in influential German opinion.¹³ Moreover, there was little opportunity for the Americans to force Germany to retire behind her own borders. They lacked the military power

to deter Germany from pursuing a policy of conquest as a result of the war; and because of the Allied blockade of Germany and a degree of bias in the American administration, there was little financial and industrial support from the United States for the German war effort and thus nothing that the Americans could withhold.¹⁴ The only control was over Allied policy, for there was considerable American financial and industrial support for the Allied war effort. According to the subsequent testimony of Robert Cecil, Sir Edward Grey

. . . rightly judged that American had it in her power to do us fatal injury. If her citizens refused to supply us with arms and money we might well have been defeated.¹⁵

But this dependence of Great Britain upon the United States developed largely in accordance with the needs of the American economy and not as a matter of deliberate governmental policy, and it was difficult for the United States to interfere with this support without jeopardizing Anglo-American harmony.¹⁶ In trying to push upon Britain a "compromise peace" policy which she opposed, there was danger of loss of British friendship altogether, with the strategic as well as economic benefits which ensued from that friendship.

There were three phases to the American attempt to bring about compromise peace. In the first, from the start of the war to the end of the first House mission to Europe, there was no attempt to use power as a factor

in diplomacy. In the second there was an attempt to bring about a negotiated peace by promising greater support for the Allies. But this was not generally considered credible -- either as regards intervention in the war, in the event of German refusal of the Conference suggested in the "House memorandum" of February, 1916, or as regards American support for Britain and France against a renewed German assault, in the event of a negotiated peace with an undefeated and still powerful Germany. The improbable idea of security through American support to counter-act German power either in the war or afterwards -- with the American idea of peace-without-victory prevailing in either case -- was discarded in favour of a more real and more probable means of security. And after the start of the great Allied offensive in 1916 -- by which time American policy was tending towards a firmer line -- it was too late for compromise peace through American influence.¹⁷

The phase of American policy which involved merely verbal encouragement of Britain to abandon her peace of victory policy began immediately upon the coming of the war. The offer of the "good offices" of the United States reflected the early influence of Bryan on American policy and the idea that the terms of peace were not of particular interest to the United States, for the American approach contained no suggestion at all as regards terms of settlement.¹⁸ Grey's guarded reply, in an interview

with the American Ambassador on 7 August, reflected the uncertainty of the military situation, upon which the question of peace terms depended.

Perhaps the struggle might be more or less even, in which case there might be an opportunity for mediation, when both sides began to feel exhausted and neither was predominant. I knew that President Wilson wished to mediate, and, whenever there appeared fair opportunity of stopping the war by mediation, we should, I felt sure, throw our influence on the side of it, and, having taken part in the war, our influence would be stronger than if we had stood outside.¹⁹

There was not yet, at this stage, an awareness of the extent to which the gradual growth of German military and economic power had disrupted the balance of power on the Continent, and of the consequent need for heavy British involvement of her manpower and her industrial and financial capacity to restore that balance. There was thus, at this point, no mention of the later requirement of British policy of definite victory over Germany in order to escape from the same degree of involvement in the Continent after the war. It was not until the American mediation bid in September that this element in British policy appeared.

The American attempt at mediation in September, 1914 was also largely the result of the initiative of Bryan. Encouraged by the German Ambassador Burnstorff, who told the former American diplomat Oscar Strauss that Germany might be disposed to end the war by mediation, Bryan sent an enquiry to the various belligerent capitals asking

whether they would accept the idea of ending the war by American mediation.²⁰ In Washington the response of Jusserand and Spring Rice, the French and British Ambassadors, was one of scepticism, the move by Bernstorff being seen as merely part of German propaganda policy.²¹ In London Grey's reaction was to point out that the real question was the terms upon which the war would be ended. This was an obvious point, but one which Bryan tended to ignore: the war to him was a European quarrel, as the Balkan crisis had been the "Servian quarrel" to Grey. But Grey now saw the war as a desperate struggle against German mastery, and the terms of peace had to reflect Allied victory. They had to bring security for the future and compensation for the "cruel wrong" done to Belgium - - an aim symbolic of the British will for victory and the assertion of British power over the German Empire. It was not sufficeint just to bring the war to an end. As for the present, Grey felt that the only thing was to await the German reply to the American message, and if it was favourable, to ascertain on what terms Germany should make peace.²² This reply came several weeks later, when the Emperor stated that as the Entente was now determined to annihilate the Central Powers, there was no hope for agreeing upon acceptable terms for ending the struggle.²³

The Emperor's statement reflected the general situation and described the difficulty faced by the forces

of moderation on the Allied side, where the idea of negotiation with Germany had been completely abandoned. Bryan not only failed to realize the determination of the Allies to pursue a policy of Victory, viewing the war entirely in a moral perspective rather than as an instrument of national interest; he also failed to see the importance of Anglo-American settlement and the danger of continually emphasizing the conflict over the peace question.²⁴

Bryan faded as a factor in American policy after the September mediation bid, however, and the advice of House became the paramount influence on Wilson's peace policy, which passed through a waiting phase in October and November. His policy, Wilson told Bryan in a letter of 8 October, 1914, was now to wait until his good offices were requested by the belligerents.²⁵ According to Spring Rice, reporting at the end of November, Bryan made no concealment of his overpowering desire to put an end to hostilities by mediation by the United States.

Unofficially he is frequently talking in this sense and urging that the continuation of hostilities is as great a crime as commencing them, and that it is the duty of each warring Power to publicly declare why it is fighting and what terms of peace it is ready to accept.

But though Wilson was "personally most anxious for mediation," he "did not think that the moment had yet come to make such a proposal to the warring powers" -- a point illustrated, on the allied side, by Spring Rice's own

view that peace negotiations at that time

. . . could only act in a manner favourable to Germany who had every interest at the present moment in a cessation of hostilities which she could resume at a more favourable moment and under better auspices.²⁶

Both Spring Rice and Page, in fact, were consistent in representing to the American Government the Victory policy of Britain. "I'm afraid," Page wrote to House on 22 October, 1914, "any peace talk with us, as it is, would merely be whistling down the wind."²⁷ Yet though House, in contrast to Bryan, was very concerned about avoiding Anglo-American confrontation on the peace question by a direct demand for an end to the war through American mediation, he was sanguine that a settlement between Germany and the Allies was not out of reach; and in the belief that the views of the Ambassadors did not necessarily present the British view and were unduly discouraging, he quietly set about determining possible terms of American mediation to end the conflict.

The general line of House's attempt to arrive at suitable terms for American mediation involved two main points, apparently based on Grey's response to the mediation attempt by Bryan in September. The two points which Grey then emphasized were Belgium and a means to secure the permanence of any peace settlement.²⁸ But throughout these negotiations he failed to convince Grey that Germany was willing to give up Belgium, let alone compensate for the "cruel wrong" done to her, and he failed to sell to

him the idea of a hypothetical scheme of future security as an alternative to winning the war.

House's attempt to work out terms of mediation on the basis of these two points began in December, 1914, when it was apparent that a stalemate situation had developed. "Would the Allies," he asked Page, "consider parleys upon a basis of indemnity for Belgium and a cessation of militarism?"²⁹ But House's concern for developing ideas on terms of mediation -- which he requested Page to convey delicately to Grey -- apparently did not go beyond Page. Replying on 12 December, the Ambassador spoke only of the British attitude in general, indicating that the British would persist in a policy of security through victory: the only way the English saw out of the danger of future insecurity was "so thoroughly to whip the war party that it will somehow be thrown out of power at home." As for the specific proposals made by House, Page felt that if the "elimination of militarism" meant disarmament, this was not a practical proposal, for England would not give up her navy. In addition, there was the problem that England was but part of an Alliance. "Russia," the Ambassador asserted, "wouldn't talk till she has Constantinople."³⁰

Page's answer was in fact a true representation of the situation. A week later, for instance, Grey indicated to Theodore Roosevelt his belief in the need for definite victory -- to prevent Prussian domination

and to bring redress for Belgium and future security against "a policy of premeditated and prepared aggression." He also indicated his concern for the Alliance as a factor in British policy:

We are, of course, bound mutually with France and Russia not to put forward terms of peace, and France and Russia will no doubt have their own conditions to make.³¹

On 25 December Asquith echoed these concerns for the Alliance when informed by Spring Rice that the German and Austrian Ambassadors in Washington were working for peace and that the Germans might agree to evacuate Belgium and give full compensation and securities against future attack. "This, of course," he wrote, "would not be good enough for either France or Russia but it is significant as showing how the wind is blowing."³²

But in spite of these obstacles to a settlement with Germany -- and the additional argument put forward by the Allied Ambassadors, that Germany would not in fact yield to the idea of peace on the basis of the status quo in view of her advantageous military position -- House persisted in the idea of sounding out the belligerents on possible terms of mediation by the United States. Apparently encouraged by a vague message from Grey -- for whom the compromise peace question was at this stage a matter of relations with the United States rather than Germany -- House decided on 23 December to visit the belligerent capitals in an attempt to reconcile their

irreconcilable war aims.³³ As he later explained to Page, he and Wilson found that they were "going around in a circle in dealing with the representatives in Washington," and the President thought it advisable and necessary to reach the principles direct. "Repeated informal talks with the different Ambassadors" and direct communication with Zimmermann had led him to believe that "peace conversations may now be initiated in an unofficial way."³⁴ On 4 January he wrote to Page of his opinion that

. . . the Dual Alliance is thoroughly ready for peace and I believe they would be willing to agree upon terms England would accept provided Russia and France could be satisfied.

Germany, he felt, would agree to the first basic points raised by Grey in September, evacuation of Belgium and France and an indemnity for Belgium. He also thought there was a solution to the problem of general security in the future: Germany would be willing "to begin negotiations upon a basis looking to permanent peace."³⁵ He apparently failed to realize that it was not security through negotiation or general settlement that Grey had in mind, and thus to comprehend why his efforts, on the Allied side at least, could only cause embarrassment. Though the Germans had indicated that he would be welcome, he complained to Page, he had not been able to get from Spring Rice any expression from his Government.³⁶

Grey did eventually agree to see House. But he stressed the problems in the way of peace. One of course

was the role that Belgium had acquired as the unifying factor in British politics in the coming of the war, and thus as a symbol of success in the war. Great Britain could not give up the restoration of Belgium, Grey wrote, "till all her resources are exhausted and she herself has shared Belgium's fate, and this is not likely to be soon accomplished." The other was the fact that Britain was part of an Alliance. "I cannot promise to do more," he concluded, "than consult our Allies as to terms of peace if there is evidence that Germany seriously desires peace."³⁷

Despite House's visit, the situation rested there. When House met with Grey on 12 February, he expressed his belief that a peace settlement on the basis of the status quo was possible in spite of the advantageous German position. Germany desired peace, he thought, for she realized that her plans had failed and that she could not succeed to the extent she hoped. Grey, however, did not believe this, since no evidence had come to them from Berlin.

Should Germany express a desire for peace, France, Russia, and England would consult together and formulate in common the conditions which they would regard as satisfactory.³⁸

Indeed, there was a movement a month later for a concerting of war aims amongst the Allies; but this did not represent a movement towards settlement with Germany, but only

continuing concern for agreement with each other in view of the British policy of seeking victory over Germany by way of Constantinople.³⁹

From his 1915 peace mission House thus returned empty-handed, leaving little impact upon the general British policy of seeking security through maintaining the Alliance with France and Russia and decisively defeating the German Army. After the failure of this first attempt he apparently became aware of the basic difference between American and British policy on the peace question and the fruitlessness of mere argument in diplomacy. His second attempt, which culminated in the "House memorandum" of February, 1916, was marked by a greater attempt to utilise American power, involving the offer of a quid pro quo for British concession on the degree to which Germany should be checked. It was also characterised by greater emphasis on the idea of an alternative method of security to the balance of power.

In August and September, 1915, Grey supported the idea of the war ending on the basis of a system for providing future security, and he emphasised the role of the United States in such a scheme.⁴⁰ The German refusal of a Conference, he wrote on 10 August, was the fatal step that had decided peace or war; the moral that should be drawn from this, therefore, was that the Powers should bind themselves to give a sanction to international law and to force any two disputing nations

to settle their dispute by arbitration or mediation.⁴¹

But it is evident that throughout these negotiations this general scheme of security was not seen as an alternative to the immediate object of a peace of victory. "All our efforts," Grey told House on 26 August, "are of course concentrated on saving ourselves and our Allies by securing victory in the war."⁴² Similarly, when Grey presented the British view on the compromise peace question to a neutral who had been with Bethmann, he observed that the end of the war was "apparently not near enough to enable terms of peace to be discussed between the Allies," and he had therefore said nothing about the terms.⁴³

Not near enough, in other words, was a sufficient defeat of the German forces. "I do not think," wrote Arthur Nicolson in the Foreign Office on 1 September,

. . . that Germany will be disposed to accept terms of peace which we and our allies consider necessary to our future security until we have placed her in such a position as practically to compel her to submit to our conditions.⁴⁴

"I think the temper both here and in France is quite excellent," he commented two weeks later, "and that we do intend to see the matter through at whatever cost to ourselves."⁴⁵

On 17 October, however, House made it clear that in his mind the idea of a general security system was to be an alternative to continuation of the war to definite victory. The time might come, he suggested, when

the American Government should intervene between the belligerents and demand that peace talks begin upon the broad basis of the elimination of militarism and navalism -- essentially the proposal he made the previous December. But he now added that the United States would throw her weight on the side that accepted their demands. If Berlin were obdurate, he specifically stated, the United States would probably join the Allies.⁴⁶

A statement of probability on the involvement of American power to restore the European balance was, however, no basis for a British peace démarche, either towards Germany or towards Britain's Allies. In his reply Grey asked if the proposal was to be taken in conjunction with the League of Nations proposal in his letter of 22 September, 1915, in which he had emphasized the importance of the involvement of American power in the cause of general security.⁴⁷ Assured by House that it was, Grey pointed out the need for greater detail on the scheme and for assurance of American intervention if the British accepted it.⁴⁸ As this answer left an opening for further negotiations for an agreement, House and Wilson resolved on a second wartime mission to Europe.⁴⁹

Direct negotiations with the British leaders began on Thursday, 6 January, when House met separately with Grey and Balfour. Though Grey narrowed the gap on the question of Anglo-American co-operation respecting the post-war arrangement by indicating his willingness to

make a concession on the "freedom of the seas" issue, he told House of general doubt on the will in the United States for involvement in the maintenance of peace, especially in view of American softness towards Germany on the submarine warfare dispute.⁵⁰ On the Monday, 10 January, House put forth the idea expressed to Grey on 17 October: President Wilson, he stated, now believed it might be necessary to bring to bear all the power of the United States "on behalf of peace and the maintenance of it." But when Grey and Balfour asked how far Wilson would be willing to enter into an agreement concerning European affairs, House replied that the President would not be willing at all to involve himself merely in traditional balance of power politics, but wished to extend American idealism to the whole world. Wilson, House stated,

. . . would be willing to come to an agreement with the civilised world upon the broad questions touching the interests and future of every nation. Such questions, for instance, as the general elimination so far as practicable, of militarism and navalism.⁵¹

There was therefore little scope for an agreement: as Balfour pointed out to House the following Saturday, such security by treaty depended on good faith, and Germany was not to be trusted.⁵² The American President's special envoy thus left England for the Continent on a pessimistic note: "British conservatism," he felt, "will make improbable any real accomplishment."⁵³ Moreover, his visits to

Berlin and Paris did nothing to make such accomplishment more likely. In Berlin he correctly pointed out the difficulty in the way of compromise peace: the Allies did not believe Germany could hold her own from then on and would therefore consider unsatisfactory any German peace terms set forth in accordance with the existing power situation.⁵⁴ But if he knew that Allied belief in eventual victory was an important obstacle to peace negotiations, his conversations in Paris could only serve to encourage this faith: the lower the Allied fortunes ebbed, he told Cambon and Briand, the closer the United States would stand by them.⁵⁵

On his return to London House again took up the idea of a peace conference, and Grey again gave a degree of support to the idea. On 10 February, according to House's account, the British Foreign Secretary agreed that it would be best for the President to demand a conference for the discussion of peace terms, though the crucial question of the time of such a conference was left vague: "it was understood, though not definitely agreed upon that he might do this within a very short time -- perhaps soon after I returned."⁵⁶ On 11 February, however, after meeting with Grey, Asquith and Balfour, House concluded that Grey's feeling was not shared by the other members of the Government -- or at least they did not wish to express it. "Public opinion here," he felt, "would condemn any Minister who would dare endorse

such a proposal." Moreover, Grey himself again raised the Alliance factor -- the idea that the war was but an instrument of grand policy and British policy had to be co-ordinated with that of France in the broad question of peace policy as well as in specific questions of negotiation, such as West Africa and the Middle East.

He took the view (House wrote) that Great Britain had not as yet been seriously hurt by the war, since but few of her men had been killed and her territory had not been invaded.

He felt, therefore, that Britain could do nothing until one of her Allies was ready to propose peace.⁵⁷

This inconclusive conference was followed by another on 14 February, attended by the same four men as well as Lloyd George and Lord Reading, the Chief Justice, who was host to the meeting. There was, according to House, agreement with regard to what he considered the essential feature -- that the President should, at some time to be later agreed upon, call a halt and demand a conference. But House had, by his own account, started off on "the key question of when the United States should demand that the war should cease and a conference be held," and on this there was no agreement. There was thus only a tentative consensus on the means by which the war should end, with the United States co-operating diplomatically with the Allies to bring about peace.⁵⁸

When House and Grey met again the following day, Grey apparently still evinced much enthusiasm for the

scheme, and plans were made to further it. He would draw up a memorandum of the understanding for House to take with him, and Grey would present the proposal to the entire Cabinet.⁵⁹ The memorandum, embodying House's October proposal, was completed between House and Grey when they met on 17 February.⁶⁰ But in spite of Grey's enthusiasm in the private talks with House on the 15th and 17th, the actual attitude presented in the memorandum represented little advance towards compromise peace. He promised only to present the proposal to the Prime Minister and his colleagues for their consideration; and he raised the factor of the unsatisfactory power situation at the time, as well as Britain's position within an Alliance.

The British Government could, under no circumstances accept or make any proposal except in consultation and agreement with the Allies. I thought that the Cabinet would probably feel that the present situation would not justify them in approaching the Allies on this subject at the present moment.⁶¹

When the War Committee discussed the proposal at a meeting on 21 March, it was decided not to take up the matter for the time being. On 8 March House had wired Grey to inform him that President Wilson agreed with the contents of the memorandum of 22 February but insisted on the inclusion of the word "probably" as regards American intentions to side against Germany if Germany should refuse the conference idea or, in the event of the conference taking place, refuse to accept the "reasonable terms"

which the United States would support.⁶² Doubt about American policy was not a factor in Grey's thinking, it seems, for he had apparently been persuaded by House to believe in the sincerity of Wilson's policy and his power to carry it out. He told the War Committee that he thought Wilson "would have the support of the whole nation of the United States in a proposal to end the war by a Conference if the Allies agreed to it."⁶³ But Spring Rice had consistently warned the Government of the internal opposition to the intervention of the United States in the war or post-war involvement to guarantee the peace. "The main thing to bear in mind," he had written on 12 February, "is that the American people want to keep out of war and will avoid it at all hazards."⁶⁴ In the War Committee this view was put forward by Asquith. Doubting that Wilson's position was strong enough to enable him to carry through the policy suggested in the memorandum of 22 February, he felt the proposal should be put aside for the present.⁶⁵

Such a policy, of course, coincided with immediate political objectives, both in the domestic and the international spheres. Besides the fact, pointed out to the War Committee by Grey, that the French at that time would not wish to avail themselves of the American offer, there was the crucial factor of the mood of the British nation, where House had found the hate even stronger than in 1915, and in Churchill's words, there was now "a fierce suppressed passion and resolve for victory at all costs and at all

risks, latent since the downfall of Napoleon."⁶⁶ When Grey had indicated to House a tentative willingness to go along with the American proposal for American diplomatic co-operation in return for concessions on terms, he had acknowledged this problem of British public opinion. He told House that a peace conference at that time would be "so unpopular . . . that he would expect to have the windows of his house broken by angry mobs."⁶⁷ By House's account, Grey was willing to have his windows broken for the sake of such a peace conference; but breaking the Government or the Alliance was apparently another matter. As Bonar Law pointed out in the War Committee

. . . at the present time the only result of peace negotiations must be based on the status quo before the war, and in the present state of public opinion the Government could not enter into negotiations on such a basis, which would be equivalent to defeat for the Allies.⁶⁸

The result of the discussion of the House peace proposal was therefore, in Grey's words, that at the time "there was no use to be made of it."

We believed, and the French believed, that defeat of the German armies was the only sure overthrow of Prussian militarism, and to the French the recovery of the lost provinces of 1870 had become an object to be fought for.⁶⁹

The broad political objectives in the war were thus essentially unchanged. What had made the American proposal an object for serious consideration to some was a growing doubt concerning the possibility of Victory. Even the

question of the French withstanding the German assault at Verdun, Grey commented to Spring Rice on 24 March, was "still a big if."⁷⁰ His stand at the meeting of 21 March -- despite his enthusiastic talk with House -- was based largely on the simple point that if the Allied situation was not to improve the British Government should make immediate use of the American offer.

If in the next six months, the Allies were likely to be able to dictate their own terms to Germany, or to improve considerably their military position it was certain that we could get better terms then with or without the intervention of the United States than could be obtained now, and it would be better not to consider President Wilson's proposals.⁷¹

Thus, as Hankey had pointed out to Robertson a week before this meeting, "the decision would largely depend upon what he and Jackson thought about the prospects of the war."⁷² As Robertson was opposed to taking up the suggestion, since General Alexieff, according to Kitchener, was confident the Russians would hold on the Riga front, and as the American exchange situation, in McKenna's opinion, was good until July, House had to report to his chief that there was "nothing doing."⁷³ "We all feel," Grey wrote to House on 24 March, "that we cannot at this moment take the initiative in asking the French to consider a conference." To give the French the impression that the British were not prepared to support them when they wished to go on "would be most repugnant to our views or feelings, besides having a disastrous political effect."⁷⁴

As the question of peace, and the House proposal in particular, was not raised when Grey and Asquith journeyed to Paris in early April, the House scheme went into storage. Grey's message to House on 7 April was a repeat of the line he had expressed throughout the war on the main needs of British policy -- to preserve the Alliance and to inflict definite defeat upon Germany.

The French press was full of the German failure at Verdun and the sinking of the Sussex and it was very clear that the French Government could not take up the idea of a conference then.

I am bound to say that I think feeling here is the same. Everybody feels there must be more German failure and some Allied success before anything but an⁷⁵ inconclusive peace could be obtained.

The warning given by House that, because the United States might have to enter the war on the submarine issue, there ought to be quick action on his scheme naturally had little effect, for breakdown in American relations with Germany would mean the gains of greater American co-operation with the Allied cause without the quid pro quo of prior concessions on policy towards Germany; it was to the Allied advantage, in fact, to encourage such a break. If the United States did not take a strong line over the German submarine policy, Grey therefore argued to House, "the Allies will not believe that the United States Government will at the conference take a line strong enough to ensure more than a patched up and insecure peace."⁷⁶

In the next three months the idea of compromise peace, by American intervention or otherwise, fell more and more into the background of British politics while the military authorities prepared to vindicate their confidence in military success in the West. An important part of House's policy had been to convince the belligerents of the probability of continuing stalemate, but in the Spring and early Summer of 1916 the general trend of thought in Britain was that the great climax of the war was approaching, when Britain would be at the height of her striking power.⁷⁷ Though House had actually given encouragement to the idea of waiting till the end of the German offensive and a following Allied offensive, which might bring about the proper psychological moment for a call for a conference, he had apparently not anticipated the time entailed.⁷⁸ Hence a growing disillusionment with the idea of co-operating with the Allies for peace, as his importunities on the need for Britain to take up President Wilson's offer went unheeded. On 10 May he attempted to initiate collaboration on the scheme of combining a conference to end the war with the establishment of a general system of security. President Wilson, he wrote Grey,

. . . would now be willing to publicly commit the United States to joining with the other Powers in a convention looking to the maintenance of peace after the war, provided he announced at the same time that if the war continued much longer he proposed calling a conference to discuss peace.

It was, he emphasised, the time for action; otherwise the opportunity would be lost.⁷⁹ But the warning had little effect on Grey, who in his reply on the 12th did not dwell at all on House's suggestion but only referred to Bethmann's speech of 8 April and the unsatisfactory nature of the terms the Chancellor outlined.⁸⁰ Hence the slight threatening tone in House's letter of 19 May, which referred to the real role which the United States was fulfilling in the Allied war effort, and the implication on 23 May that American diplomatic co-operation was not to be taken for granted if the Allies insisted on a severe peace.

England and France seem to think that the co-operation America is willing to give them in a just settlement of the vexatious questions that are sure to follow peace does not outweigh the doubtful advantage they would gain if Germany were completely crushed.⁸¹

But Grey's reply was the same as always: he could not act without the consent of France, and until France raised the topic, the British could do nothing in the matter.⁸²

On 12 April Grey had in fact discussed the question with Pichon, a French Foreign Ministry official who was in London in connection with the Anglo-French agreement on the Middle East. He pointed out that though Berlin accused Britain of preventing the Allies from making peace,

. . . no one of the Allies had ever yet hinted to the others that the time had yet come when we could make peace or even discuss conditions. When any of the Allies felt that time had come it could, of course, approach the others.

Pichon agreed that "it was absolutely impossible for any of the Allies to feel that the time had yet come when we could secure satisfactory terms," and he felt that the war "must be finished victoriously."⁸³ A month later President Poincaré spoke explicitly on the need for absolute victory. France, he said, did not want Germany to offer peace, but to ask for it; "so long as our enemies shall not have recognised themselves as vanquished we shall not cease fighting."⁸⁴

The apparent agreement on Anglo-American co-operation to bring about peace in Europe thus became a dead letter. When President Wilson publicly initiated his scheme for a general system of security, in a speech to the League to Enforce Peace on 27 May, he acted unilaterally and did not combine this démarche with a call for a peace conference or the threat of such a move, as had been envisioned by House.⁸⁵ On 8 June House's letter to Grey had an element of finality to it, largely because of his pessimism on the French willingness for peace -- a point indicative of a degree of success for Grey's policy of minimizing Anglo-American conflict, for as Balfour would point out in connection with the Allied reply to the American peace note of 18 December, 1916, it was "apparently an accepted principle of our American diplomacy that the Americans will stand from the French what they will not stand from us."⁸⁶

House's letter of 8 June also touched upon two other major points in British policy. One was the idea that thorough defeat of Germany served Allied interests. Against this idea he argued the role of Germany in the general balance of power -- which John Morley had raised at the time of his resignation in August, 1914, and which Grey had largely ignored, apparently in the belief that settlement of the issues of dispute would lead to permanent good relations with Russia after Germany was crushed.⁸⁷ "In getting rid of the German peril," House warned, "another might be easily created." Moreover, he was sceptical of the possibility as well as the benefits of decisive victory. "Unless you have better means of knowing the situation than we have," he argued, "there does not seem to be much reason for the optimism of the Allies." As far as he could see, he concluded,

. . . there is nothing to add or do for the moment; and if the Allies are willing to take the gamble which the future may hold, we must rest content.

The Allies were in fact willing to take the gamble as long as the military and naval and economic authorities in the Government believed that chances were good that Victory could be obtained. Despite an apparent temporary aberration on the part of Grey -- brought on by doubts about Allied chances of Victory or passing enthusiasm, perhaps diplomatic, about the prospect of escape from the war which he hated so much -- there was little chance

from the beginning that House would change the British policy of Victory without utilising American power in a less hypothetical way. On 23 February, the day Grey presented the memorandum to House to take home, Asquith answered a call for negotiated peace in the Commons merely with a repetition of the policy statement of November, 1914: Britain would not sheathe her sword until "the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed."⁸⁸ Lloyd George, in whom House had felt he had effected a change, was equally adamant on the need for decisive victory: "For my part," he told Riddell on 26 February, "I still say we must beat the Germans."⁸⁹

Bethmann-Hollweg's statement, in April, that Germany was willing to enter into negotiations, merely brought forth further public assertions of the Government's will to destroy the military domination of Prussia. "We believe," Grey stated, for an American newspaper,

. . . that the German people -- when once the dreams of world empire cherished by Pan-Germanism are brought to naught -- will insist upon the control of its Government; and in this lies the hope of secure freedom and national independence in Europe. For a German democracy will not plot and plan wars as Prussian militarism plotted wars to take place at a chosen date in the future.⁹⁰

The answer of the German Chancellor, also in the American press, showed the great gulf between British and German policy. Germany would only approach peace, he stated, "when statesmen take the war situation as every war map shows it."⁹¹

British policy, however, was to change the war map. Both he and Kitchener agreed, Robertson reported to Haig on 14 April,

. . . that all the Cabinet had come to the conclusion that the war could only be ended by fighting, and several were most anxious for a definite victory over German arms, viz., the Sec. for Foreign Affairs (Grey) and the⁹² Chancellor of the Exchequer (McKenna).

On 24 May, in an aggressive speech in the House of Commons -- well-received throughout the country according to the American Ambassador -- Grey spoke of Bethmann's peace terms as "terms of a victorious Germany": if they were accepted, "they leave the other States of Europe at her mercy whenever she chooses to pursue an aggressive policy towards them again." There would therefore be no peace, he again declared, until the German military despotism was broken.⁹³

CHAPTER IV: VICTORY THE ONLY POLICY

"It is only by the complete defeat of the Germans and Austrian armies that the objects of the war can be obtained."

War Office Memorandum, January, 1917.¹

The six-month period beginning with the start of the Somme offensive on 1 July, 1916 -- and specifically the month of September -- saw the climax in the British policy of crushing the military power of Germany. The Peace-of-Victory policy was naturally based on the assumption that Victory was possible. After the disappointments of 1914 and 1915 the main hope was placed on the idea of defeating the enemy by bringing to bear maximum British power in a great Western offensive, in combination with offensives on the Russian and Italian fronts. As Lord Crawford pointed out in a memorandum of September, 1916, when the actual situation as regards territory controlled was still relatively unchanged by the Western offensive then occurring,

We are entitled to insist upon stringent terms. Our whole strategy has been perforce based upon the initial unpreparedness of the Allies. Now when our equipment is at length maturing, and when our economic and military forces are attaining a decisive momentum it would be quixotic to sacrifice the advantages of our prolonged efforts.²

But as the Somme offensive developed, there was an obvious lack of evidence that the military momentum to which Crawford referred would in fact prove decisive. As for the economic forces, a "wonderful development of

submarine warfare" which Nicolson had noted in February as the main factor in a shipping shortage which was "really causing the Allies the most extreme inconvenience" was even more wonderful by the autumn.³ This development was at least equalizing the advantages which the Allies had earlier enjoyed in economic warfare, while the British financial position which had been a major factor in a Cabinet crisis in December, 1915, began to create even graver difficulties in late 1916.⁴

One consequence of this general situation was that some members of the government began to view more sympathetically the idea of abandoning the Peace-of-Victory policy in favour of the idea of a peace settlement arising from negotiations with an undefeated Germany. Specific war aims would then become factors in themselves in the question of ending the war -- which they had not been hitherto. One necessary consequence of such a development would then be the adjustment of military policy to reflect such a new political strategy -- in the words of a General Staff memorandum of March, 1917, "if the main trunk be found too great to fell it may be necessary to procede merely to lopping off the branches."⁵ But in fact the Victory policy survived the doubts at the end of 1916, The Asquith Government, always inclined to temporize, was gradually being forced by circumstances towards a position where the idea of peace through negotiation would have to be accepted in principle. But public opinion was less subject

to change, especially when the uncertain basis of the victory assumption was not made public; and while Asquith slightly softened his public stance on the objects of the war, Lloyd George -- always sensitive to popular feeling -- came to power in December as the main advocate of the "knock-out blow". When the German and American Governments produced their respective peace notes shortly afterwards, the consequent British statements of peace terms did not represent a yielding on the Victory policy: they should be seen mainly as part of the British policy of settlement with the United States, which still played a vital role in the British defensive struggle with Germany, and without whose assistance, the "knock-out blow" would probably never have been delivered.

The key to the hope for Allied victory in 1916 was the idea of attrition. Because of the long term superiority of the Allies, it was felt, the war could be won by wearing down the manpower resources of the enemy until they were too weak to hold. This policy of Victory through attrition which, as tested in the Somme offensive, was implicitly a key factor in British political strategy in 1916, was decided upon as a matter of policy in early 1916, after official British thinking on how Victory was to be obtained had passed through several earlier phases.

Before the war there had been no expectation of the development of that "remarkable deadlock" which faced the belligerent governments at the end of 1914.⁶ Thinking

tended to be in terms of decision through a "big battle". "The Germans," stated a War Office memorandum of November, 1911, "will follow the French field forces until a decision one way or the other has been gained."⁷ But the idea of such an ending to the war had generally disappeared after five months of warfare. After the Battle of the Marne the Allied attempts to dislodge the enemy in the battles of Picardy and Artois were unsuccessful, as were the German drive for the Channel ports in the battle of Ypres, the general Allied offensive in December on the whole front from Nieuport to Verdun, and the French assault on the German lines in Champagne.⁸ "As . . . I came to realize the much greater relative power which modern weapons have given to the defence," Sir John French wrote ". . . so . . . I began dimly to apprehend what the future might have in store for us." After the fighting in October he came to the conclusion "that given forces fairly equally matched, you can 'bend' but you cannot 'break' your enemy's trench line."⁹

This view was generally shared by the political leaders. "I think it quite possible," Churchill wrote to Asquith on 29 December, "that neither side will have the strength to penetrate the other's lines in the Western theatre. . . . my impression is that the position of both armies is not likely to undergo any decisive change."¹⁰ Balfour, a member of the Committee of Imperial Defence, though not of the Government, was of the same opinion.

On 2 January, 1915, he wrote to Sir Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the Committee:

I agree, and I fear that everybody must agree, that the notion of driving the Germans back from the West of Belgium to the Rhine by successfully assaulting and capturing one line of trenches after another seems a very hopeless affair, and unless some means can be found for breaking their line at some critical point, and threatening their communications, I am unable to see how the deadlock in the West is to be brought to any rapid or satisfactory conclusion.¹¹

These fears as to the possibility of military advance were born out by the results of the offensives in the West in 1915. These were carried out in spite of the serious doubts on the possibility of success largely because of the interdependence of the allies, which, as Grey has pointed out, affected strategy as well as policy.¹² As Lord Esher, British representative at French general headquarters bluntly stated to Balfour on 25 January, "Your Cabinet cannot give effect to any decision at which you may arrive. France and Russia, but especially France, must be consulted and be convinced either way"¹³ Thus the broad outlines of the Spring and Summer strategy were set at the meeting between Joffre and French on 27 December, 1914, where the views of Joffre prevailed -- views only approved subsequently by an uncertain British Cabinet.¹⁴ In the offensive action which ensued the short-lived break-through at Neuve Chapelle was the only encouraging sign in a series of futile assaults.¹⁵

At the close of the offensive operations in early summer the general military and strategic position was "exhaustively discussed", and the conclusion of this Cabinet meeting, as formulated in a minute by Asquith, expressed doubts on the likelihood of success in the West. The Western theatre was still to be "the dominant one"; but in view of "the still imperfect equipment of our New Army in the matter of artillery ammunition" and "the uncertainties of the strategic position", it was to be strongly represented to the French that they should defer any offensive operations.¹⁶ Yet as a result of the Anglo-French conference the following week and another in August between Kitchener, Joffre and French, a major autumn offensive was agreed upon. Kitchener reported to the Cabinet on 20 August that Joffre was determined, on political and military grounds, "to take the offensive without delay and on a considerable scale." Though Kitchener was "far from sanguine that any substantial military advantage will be achieved", he argued that for the sake of the Alliance the British ought to comply with the wishes of General Joffre. This they did eventually, in spite of the arguments of Churchill on the danger of the proposed operations, and the agreement expressed by Asquith, Lord Lansdowne -- a member of the Government since the formation of the Coalition in May -- and even Kitchener himself on many of the points raised.¹⁷ The consequence was the unsuccessful Allied offensives in

the Battles of Loos and Champagne, which resulted in 95,000 British casualties and 350,000 French.¹⁸ The result on the attitude of the British Commander-in-Chief was his new view, expressed to Haig on 28 September when Allied failure was clear, that the British Government "ought to take the first opportunity of concluding peace otherwise England would be ruined."¹⁹

Such disappointments in the West in 1914 and 1915 had been matched by disappointments in other theatres. Although subject to the law of diminishing returns, sufficient hope had been placed in these -- notably the Dardanelles -- to keep alive the general hope of ultimate military victory, which supported the political policy of avoiding settlement with Germany. While the setbacks in the West in 1914 produced a growing feeling that the war would be a long one, demanding great changes in the pattern of life in liberal England, there was still a great confidence in the idea that the Russian streamroller would eventually crush Germany in the East if France and Britain could only hold on in the West. On 4 August, 1914, for instance, Balfour had written to Haldane:

If Germany could be 'stalemated' in her advance through Belgium and North East France, her position becomes very perilous with the menace of Russia on her Eastern frontier.²⁰

A similar view was expressed by Sir John French, in an Order of the Day for his troops on 2 November. The Germans, he stated, had elected to throw the weight of their forces against the armies in the West:

The great fight which you have so splendidly maintained against superior numbers in the western theatre will be decided and completed by our brave Allies in the East, and I think that we on this side have reason to hope that we have completed the most severe and arduous part of our task.²¹

A speech by Kitchener at the end of November, as well as the Intelligence Departments of the French and British Armies, supported the view that there would soon be a great withdrawal of German troops from the Western theatre of war.²² By December, 1914, however, the hope placed in Russia was fading, in view of reports of an impending crisis in the Russian situation, especially as regards the supply of munitions. The Russian news was very serious, Kitchener reported to French on 18 December: "I fear we cannot rely on them for much more for some time."²³ When French discussed the situation with the Cabinet on 21 and 22 December, fears were expressed that the Russian condition

. . . would certainly oblige them to evacuate the enemy territory they had already won, and even necessitate a retirement behind the Vistula, if not the Bug, with the loss of Warsaw and other important fortresses.

"Impending severe Russian defeats" might enable the enemy to amass in the West a force strong enough to break through and "attain, after all, their original objectives, namely Paris and the Channel ports."²⁴ In fact, the Russians showed considerable strength in an offensive against Austria in the Winter and early Spring

of 1915, taking the Carpathian fortress of Przemyśl and thus threatening an invasion of the Hungarian plain. But the expected severe defeats did eventually come, from May to September, when the failure of Russia, in Churchill's words, "made it certain that the war would last for years."²⁵

Such a situation was made even more likely by the failure of the Anglo-French assault on the Dardanelles to fulfil military and political expectations.²⁶ Admittedly, prospects of success in this attack -- which Asquith thought would put Constantinople in Allied hands in two weeks -- together with the Russian successes against Austria-Hungary in early 1915 -- aided Allied diplomacy in effecting Italian intervention.²⁷ In several quarters it was indeed hoped that this would tip the scales. In a memorandum of 9 January, 1915, for instance, French stated that if Italy were a friendly belligerent, "her own action should be sufficient to finish Austria."²⁸ But by the autumn it was clear that the Italian intervention had made little difference: "I cannot see," wrote General Callwell to Admiral Oliver in October, "that they have assisted the operations of the Entente much in any quarters. Certainly not on land."²⁹ This was on the 11th, the same day on which Belgrade fell to the Austro-German offensive which had just begun in South-East Europe.

Encouraged by the German successes in Russia and Allied failure at the Straits, Bulgaria declared war on Serbia on 14 October, and by the end of the year

Britain's Ally in South-East Europe was completely routed.³⁰ British concentration on felling the trunk in 1915, largely for the sake of relations with France, had led to insufficient support for Serbia and an inadequate effort at the Straits and had allowed the branches to grow dangerously. Moreover, the contemplated abandonment of the Gallipoli campaign altogether was seen by some to contain a further threat for the British political position in Europe, where even the loss of Russia was feared if prize of Constantinople were apparently beyond reach and her former Eastern frontier not to be regained by military means.³¹ Such a policy -- involving as it did the apparent acceptance of military defeat by Non-Europeans -- was also seen as a threat to the British position in the Orient, especially at a time when German power was apparently growing rapidly in Turkey and the powerful principle of nationality -- so contradictory to Britain's Imperial interests -- was being so vigourously preached in the West to justify the Allied war effort.³²

At the end of 1915, therefore, the belief in victory which lay behind the refusal to accept, even in principle, the idea of a return to a policy of settlement with Germany was certainly open to question. As Grey commented on a general conversation with the Italian Ambassador in mid-September, it was a matter of course in such conversations

. . . to make the best of things to speak of what was hoped, and not of what was feared;

but in intercourse at home anxiety could not be concealed, and when alone one sometimes knew what it was to have to resist "the fear that kills, and hope that is unwilling to be fed."³³

The basis of hope at the end of 1915 was little more than a vague feeling of the long-term superiority of the Allies, who had not initially been prepared for the war. Time, it was thought, was on the side of the Allies. As early as 4 September, 1914, after the British retreat from Mons, Asquith had attempted to sell the country on the idea of victory coming only after a long struggle, with much sacrifice. "We must learn," he stated, "to take long views and to cultivate above all other faculties those of patience, endurance and steadfastness."³⁴ "The British," Page reported, soon afterwards, "are now going about the business of war as if they knew they would continue it indefinitely."³⁵

Fortunately, Asquith and Grey had the support of most of their Liberal Cabinet colleagues, as well as the Unionists, on the idea of a long and full mobilization of the resources of the British Empire for the sake of the policy of victory over Germany -- a definite advance from the original decision of mere British intervention. Churchill, Haldane and Crewe thought as Grey did on the paramount need to defeat the German menace, even in a war of several years at very great cost, and with the retreat from Mons, the ebullient Chancellor of the Exchequer also made a significant retreat, moving more fully away

from his earlier pacifist, Radical position by agreeing to such a complete effort by the British nation -- and appealing to the nation, in his Queen's Hall speech of 19 September, with the traditional conservative values of Courage, Sacrifice, Patriotism and Duty.³⁶ There were others, however, who were more consistent in their liberalism and fought a rearguard action against demands of modern war upon British finance and manpower. Throughout 1915 Reginald McKenna, President of the Board of Trade and then Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Coalition Government, took the lead in arguing the manpower needs of the British economy against the demands of the military, with Kitchener insisting that seventy British divisions were required to win the war. In December, 1915, a year of argument on the manpower issue culminated in a Cabinet crisis, John Simon resigning because of objection in principle to conscription. Asquith, concerned above all with keeping the Government together, as he was on the intervention question, and dependent upon Kitchener as well as the recalcitrant Liberals for his own position, followed the general policy of delaying issues. There was thus some point to the comment regarding "the paralysis of the Cabinet" that

. . . the one and only thing they had unanimously agreed upon for the last months was that Kitchener must go -- and there he was, still in the saddle.³⁷

Kitchener was the key figure in the manpower question, which in turn was the key factor in British

military and political policy in 1916, since the main basis of British strategy had become the idea that Germany could be worn down, an idea which involved considerations of manpower resources available and respective manpower wastage rates. As Selborne pointed out to Kitchener, on 21 September when urging him to support conscription, the situation "once was entirely within your control and is still largely within your control" -- though he feared that it would pass out of his control while the War Secretary leisurely considered the figures of the National Register.³⁸ This control by Kitchener on Cabinet policy, like the later influence of Haig and Robertson, was due largely to his great popular prestige, as well as a general attitude of awe towards the military.³⁹ Of the Liberals in the Government only Churchill and Haldane had devoted serious study to the problems of war; Balfour was the one person knowledgeable in military affairs amongst the Unionists, and there was no adequate system of unbiased military advice for the Government.⁴⁰ Balfour and particularly Lloyd George and Churchill were often critical of the policy of the military; otherwise, as Lord Beaverbrook has pointed out, there was a "feeling of inferiority of the highly-placed civilian to the highly-placed soldier."⁴¹

Though long doubtful of the necessity of conscription, Kitchener was one of the leaders in the idea that Germany would have to be worn down over a long war, and even before the retreat from Mons he had stated his belief that the war

would last for three years.⁴² In October, 1915, he emphasized the importance of an increase of manpower, arguing that without seventy divisions the British should not have done all in their power to avert the disasters that must ensue from an unsuccessful termination of the war.

The French Army has apparently passed its zenith in numbers, and the imperative calls for forces, owing to our enemies acting on interior lines and being thus able to dispose of their forces in different theatres must be obvious to all my colleagues.

Italy and Russia can give us very little hope of relief in these matters, and, though their efforts may be increased in the future, they will not in my opinion, bring a decisive end to the war, and therefore the Western theatre must continue to be the dominant factor.⁴³

On 21 January, 1916, Kitchener foresaw the culmination of the long war which he had predicted. An assault on the German lines in the West in March or April would bring about unofficial suggestions for peace from Berlin in June; a further long assault starting in August would bring peace by November, giving Alsace-Lorraine to France, separating Bohemia and Hungary from the Austrian Empire, but leaving Germany strong in the East.⁴⁴

In the meantime on 28 December the Cabinet had agreed to the broad principle "that from the point of view of the British Empire, France and Flanders will remain the main theatres of operations."⁴⁵ They had also "all more or less sullenly agreed" on the idea of using compulsion to raise the size of the British

forces to the seventy divisions upon which Kitchener based his scheme of victory -- a figure which earlier had led Balfour to comment that he had not "the least notion how the number 'seventy' was arrived at."⁴⁶ Indeed, the basis of this -- and information on other key factors in this attrition strategy of victory, such as German manpower resources and predicted wastage rates in an offensive on the respective sides -- still remains somewhat of a mystery. An indication of the general approach might be found, however, in a significant recollection by Leo Amery, who in early 1916 was transferred for a time to the German section of the War Office to help with the working out of estimates on the German manpower situation, a subject on which

Headquarters in France, and the War Office in consequence, had consistently indulged in wishful thinking, and had convinced themselves that, for sheer lack of men, Germany could not carry on beyond the beginning of 1917, at latest. I managed to convince my immediate seniors that there was no reason why Germany should not be able to keep her army in the field up to 1919 at any rate. But they felt that to put any later date than the beginning of 1918 would only discredit their conclusions in the eyes of higher authority. So they compromised on that figure.⁴⁷

Such arithmetic was a serious matter. Even the compromise date for the end of the war showed a serious gap between War Office policy and the thinking of many members of the Government. The terms of reference for Lord Crewe, for instance, in preparing his Collective

Report on manpower in the late summer of 1915, were "to show the resources of the nation in man-power and equipment with a view to the successful termination of the war during 1916, having regard to financial and industrial possibilities."⁴⁸ Indeed, the gap between the military and general political thinking apparently went even further. The war was not for Kitchener a means of escape from the necessity of Britain's being a military power: at the war's end British forces must be greater than those of France -- "it would not do for the French to have more than us."⁴⁹

The question of how Britain could spare the manpower for the duration of the war -- let alone carry on as a great military power afterwards -- was settled by Kitchener in as rough a manner as the War Office calculations on German manpower resources. If the country were exhausted by the war and money were not available, he wrote to Asquith on 11 January, 1916, "there would be nothing to be said;" but he did not believe that was the case:

. . . the country as a whole is not feeling the pinch of the war and the 60 odd millions [£] difference does not appear to me to be a sum that cannot be easily found.

As regards men, we have only to look at the streets and the country to see masses of men who could serve without any material difference with trade.⁵⁰

A more scientific approach to the manpower question, closely connected with the issue of British financial and industrial possibilities, was taken by J.M. Keynes and Sir John Bradbury. They presented a report in September, 1915, in which a limit of six months of the present

wartime expenditure was advised -- a conclusion to which Selborne reacted with that vague sense of British wealth and power so typical of the majority attitude and so influential on policy:

I can only say that it is very hard for one, who is not an expert in finance, to believe that a country possessing such an annual income and such an accumulated capital as the United Kingdom should be unable to finance this war for more than six months even at the present vast scale of expenditures.⁵¹

Though the Cabinet crisis of 1915 on manpower and finance was smoothed over and the Government survived, the divisions in 1915 on the questions of British staying power and the means of achieving Victory were carried on into 1916. The basic difference was largely between those who tended to operate on a certain blind faith or hope that long-term Allied superiority would eventually prevail and those who tended to analyze the question more closely in relation to past experience and to ask whether the present course would indeed bring Victory, approaching the issue more in terms of facts than questionable preconceptions about Allied superiority.⁵² Winter and Spring of 1916 saw the gradual triumph of the "blind faith" school, resulting in the Somme offensive.

The triumph of the policy of military victory through attrition came against a rearguard action on the part of certain members of the Government who, in the words of Robertson, "still hold fast to belief that victory could never be won -- or only at prohibitive cost -- by

straightforward action on the Western front."⁵³ As late as 13 March, a week before the negative decision on House's proposal, he reported to Haig that there was "a fairly strong party in the War Committee opposed to offensive operations on your front in the spring or indeed at any time." Though it was decided that day that the military were to prepare for offensive operations in the Spring, the Cabinet would not commit themselves definitely to them.⁵⁴ Kitchener, however, was strongly in favour of knocking out Germany through a great offensive in 1916, as also the general strategy of reducing the German danger while there was the opportunity:

. . . unless we can impose a peace by force of arms this year we shall run a terrible risk of an unsatisfactory stalemate peace which will certainly necessitate hostilities again in about five years when we shall have few Allies and be unprepared. . . . if we have to have to go through another winter I doubt whether France will stick it out or be able to do so.⁵⁵

As Grey, McKenna and, more reluctantly, Lloyd George supported this strategy, Haig was authorized at the end of March to plan an offensive with the Allies.⁵⁶ British hopes for victory over Germany in 1916 henceforth rested, in Haig's words, on "a simultaneous offensive on the main fronts, in the greatest possible force, and sustained until victory was won."⁵⁷

On 1 July a massive artillery bombardment of the German lines announced the beginning of this great climax for British policy in World War I and for the future of

Europe. With the start of the Somme offensive, the question of Victory became very dependent, as never before, on the respective casualty returns. As Balfour had pointed out the previous summer, before the autumn campaigns made him suspicious of further offensives in the West,

. . . there is no prospect, I believe, of the Allies obtaining an old-fashioned victory over the Germans at this stage of the war.
 . . . the problem which our generals have to solve, and so far as I can see, the only problem, is how they can inflict heavy numerical losses upon their opponents without suffering as heavy losses themselves. The success or failure of every operation must be measured in terms of killed and wounded, not in terms of positions lost or gained.⁵⁸

The reports of British casualties after the first days of the Somme offensive -- 40,000 by the end of the second day according to the early calculations of the Adjutant-General -- were an ill omen, and by the end of the month, when losses were, in Haig's words, "about 120,00 more than they would have been had we not attacked," Robertson was reporting that "the Powers that be" were becoming uneasy. The Cabinet was questioning

. . . whether a loss of say 300,000 men will lead to really great results, because, if not we ought to be content with something less than we are doing.⁵⁹

Such uneasiness, however, brought no change in policy, military or political. A memorandum on the important question of casualties, written by Churchill and circulated by Sir Frederick Smith, the Attorney-General, as Churchill was no longer in the Government, created some stir.⁶⁰ But

the detailed argument in Churchill's paper was apparently defeated in the eyes of the War Committee by a letter from Haig on 1 August which merely repeated his original point of view that an offensive would wear down the German reserves: "the maintenance of a steady offensive pressure will result eventually in (the German's) complete overthrow. . . . In another 6 weeks the enemy should be hard put to it to find men."⁶¹ On 5 August Robertson wrote Haig that he had read this letter to the War Committee that day and "it pleased them very much indeed." It was decided, Robertson said, that Haig's letter be printed and circulated to the Cabinet as a rejoinder to Churchill's memorandum, to which, Robertson felt, the letter was an adequate reply. It was also decided that the C.I.G.S. should send a message to Haig, "assuring him that he might count on full support from home."⁶²

It was largely in the belief, based mainly on the confidence of Haig and Robertson, that victory was around the corner that steps were taken in the summer and early autumn to prepare for a conference on peace terms, not in the expectation of stalemate and awareness of need for a peace of compromise. This sense of approaching victory had developed prior to the start of the great assault in the West. After the German failure of Verdun, House noted, the Allies had "acquired new confidence and a disinclination to do anything in the direction of peace because of this attitude."⁶³ And on 28 June Lord Esher

reported to Haig that the Germans were "in the lowest depths of anxiety" and had sent an emissary to sound the French Government on the idea of an armistice -- a message to which the French, he said, had replied that a necessary condition was the return of all French, British, and Russian prisoners.⁶⁴ On 27 July, in spite of the temporary doubts in the War Committee Robertson described two days later, Grey repeated to Page the old arguments against an end to the war at that stage. Though the notion was widespread in America that the war would end inconclusively, as a draw, "he didn't think that this notion was held by any considerable group of people in any other country, certainly not in Great Britain." On the question of peace Grey raised again the point that Britain was part of an Alliance and that the British were just bringing their power to bear:

. . . none of the Allies could mention peace or discuss peace till France should express such a wish; for it is the very vitals of France that have received and are receiving the shock of such an assault as was never before launched against any nation. Unless France was ready to quit, none of France's Allies could mention peace, and France showed no mood to quit. Least of all could the English make or receive any such suggestion at least till her new great army had done its best; for until lately the severest fighting had not been done by the British, whose army had practically been held in reserve.⁶⁵

A week after this interview, Sturmer, the new Russian Foreign Minister, belied Grey's words to Page, asking Buchanan whether he thought "the time had not come for

the Allied Governments to reflect on and to discuss eventual terms of peace," and hinting at the idea of a permanent Anglo-Russian alliance, perhaps as an alternative to reducing the German danger to the extent originally envisioned. But the idea was given short shrift by the British Ambassador, who "thought personally it would be premature to start such a discussion so long as Germany was still in occupation of Poland, Belgium, and Northern France."⁶⁶

It was evident, however, that the time would come when Britain would have to concert with her Allies on the terms of peace, and shortly afterwards Grey took what was apparently a first step towards development of conclusions on general British desiderata at a peace settlement, primarily with a view to agreement with the Allies -- though the possibility of negotiation with Germany was not excluded. It appeared to Sir Edward Grey, stated a Foreign Office letter to the Board of Trade on 8 August,

. . . very necessary that His Majesty's Government should have a clear idea of what increase of territory is desirable in the interests of the British Empire, and how much of the territory already taken from the enemy by Great Britain and her Allies can be used (a) for surrendering to the Allies as their share and (b) for bargaining with Germany in the event of the Allies being unable to impose their own final peace terms upon Germany.⁶⁷

Though the committee on territorial changes, for which this Foreign Office letter formed part of the terms of

reference, undertook eventually to arrange British desiderata in terms of a scale of priorities in case the Peace-of-Victory policy were not possible, the literature on the question of peace terms in the late summer and autumn of 1916 generally assumed victory over Germany, and the main concern was for defence of British interests in a settlement with the Allies.⁶⁸ On 17 August, for instance, when Robertson wrote to Lloyd George of his anxiety in regard to the British position in the event of negotiations opening for an Armistice or Peace -- which "may arise any day in some form or another though by no means in a definite form" -- he expressed the fear that the British might be caught unprepared and "find that we have mobilised for peace as we did for War -- inadequately and subordinate to France."

We may be sure (he wrote) that M. Briand will have very decided views. . . . These views, cleverly and cunningly crystalised, will probably have been communicated to Russia, as an old Ally of France, and not to us. In fact we may find the greater part of the Entente in agreement on matters regarding which we have not been consulted and to which we cannot agree. . . . The Germans, if they are adroit, and having more or less complete political control so far as the enemy Powers are concerned, will drive a wedge in between the Entente Powers, and we may find ourselves left without support.⁶⁹

A paper prepared by Edwin Montagu on 29 August was written in a similar vein: it was, he argued, "horrible to allow oneself to think even for a moment that the fruits of victory may be spoiled for us by unsatisfactory terms

of peace," and it was not safe to leave out of account the possibility of sudden peace. Even if the time had not come when the Allies were undoubtedly winning -- "on the assumption which I imagine everybody makes that we are going to win" -- the time would have to come when "the intelligent, calculating, scientific people of Germany" would realize that the Allies were winning and that nothing could prevent them.⁷⁰

Prompted by such considerations and rumours of an impending call for an armistice, the Prime Minister brought up the question of British desiderata at a meeting of the War Committee on 30 August.⁷¹ His request for further papers brought a memorandum from Robertson the following day -- essentially the same as the one sent to Lloyd George on the 17th -- and several more in September and October -- from Lord Crawford, Balfour and Admiral Jackson, the First Sea Lord, all of which assumed a full Allied victory.⁷² The offensive in the West had indeed advanced steadily and at times had come close to breaking the German defences, and August and September was generally a time of optimism.⁷³ As a later General Staff memorandum pointed out, Robertson's memorandum of 31 August was written when the military situation seemed to vindicate the earlier belief that 1916 was to be the victorious climax of the British policy of Victory.

On the Western front the Germans were being hard pressed. Their offensive at Verdun had failed with heavy losses, while on the Somme they were being constantly driven

back, and it was known that the morale of their troops was suffering from the severe punishment they were sustaining. There were signs, too, that the strain of resisting the Franco-British attacks in the West and of simultaneously bolstering up the defeated Austrians in the East was making a heavy demand upon their resources both in men and material.

Allied hopes were further raised by the adhesion of Roumania -- whose military strength, it was hoped, "would be sufficient to exercise an appreciable influence in defeating the Dual Monarchy" -- by the success of Russia in Galicia and the Bukovina and the prospect of further Russian successes after the great increase in her supply of guns and ammunition expected in the Spring of 1917, and by the occupation of Gorizia by Italy.⁷⁴ The belief in imminent victory was strengthened by the apparent German policy on the peace question. In September the expectation of a German move for peace was supported by a telegram from Bethmann Hollweg to Bernstorff, intercepted by Naval Intelligence, stating that the protraction of hostilities "would impair Germany's military position" and the German Government "should most earnestly consider a peace action by the President."⁷⁵

By the end of October, however, it was clear that the great offensive which was to bring victory in 1916 had not succeeded, although the military authorities still took the view that much had been accomplished. "It is sufficient reward for me," Haig wrote complacently to his wife on 24 October, as if the war were all but over,

"to have taken part in this great struggle, and to have occupied no inconsiderable position amongst those who have helped our country to weather the storm."⁷⁶ But weathering the storm meant reducing what Nicolson in January called "the apparent, and I am afraid for the moment real, military predominance of the Central Powers" -- a goal to be accomplished by wearing down German manpower through a steady offensive. A letter to Balfour, written the same day and enclosing a note on the German strength on their fronts, tended to present a different picture. "There is," Haig wrote, "an increase, not a diminution of Divisions here."⁷⁸

This ultimate failure of the Somme offensive to bring the Peace-of-Victory within sight combined with a growing deterioration of the economic situation, caused largely by the submarine activity and a continuing trade imbalance, to produce a hazardous situation for Britain and another Cabinet crisis. In November the British Government learned of an impending increase in German submarine activity, the consequences of which could prove disastrous for British policy.⁷⁹ Unless in the next two months Britain could do something about the rapidly increasing submarine danger, Grey wrote to Balfour, "the Germans will see their way to victory."

My impression is that the Germans, who would have closed with a proposal for peace in terms of a draw in September or even October, are now out again for victory. Under these circumstances we must make

every effort to cope with the submarines,
and there is no time to be lost.⁸⁰

Though ultimately the German decision to seek victory through unrestricted submarine warfare would save the Allies from unbreakable deadlock or even defeat by bringing the United States into the war, this compensation was by no means certain in the late autumn of 1916. Indeed, Anglo-American relations had deteriorated to a state where withdrawal of American financial support was threatened: the Federal Board of Reserve, McKenna reported to the Cabinet on 29 November, had issued a warning to the American banks not to give further borrowing facilities to the Allied Governments. As Spring Rice reported two days later,

. . . this Government has got no hostile intentions against the Allies, but is merely anxious wholly for humanitarian reasons to expedite the cause of peace. As I have already pointed out it is peace which is desired -- the terms being a matter of indifference. For the future an adequate guarantee is believed to have been found in the League to Enforce Peace. . . .

Senator Stone, the Ambassador added, "has rather unkindly warned the public that the Senate would not pass the desired Treaty."⁸¹

In the meantime the growing doubts in various sectors of the country and the Government about the possibility of Victory had at last found expression within the Government, in a memorandum by Lord Lansdowne presented to the Cabinet on 13 November. Containing

the suggestion that the Government "ought . . . not to discourage any movement, no matter where originating, in favour of an interchange of views as to the possibility of a settlement," Lansdowne's paper was significant as the first explicit suggestion within the Government that Britain might need to abandon the policy of seeking a peace of Victory. "No one for a moment believes that we are going to lose the war," Lansdowne stated,

. . . but what is our chance of winning it in such a manner, and within such limits of time, as will enable us to beat our enemy to the ground and impose upon him the kind of terms which we so freely discuss?

In view of the various doubtful factors behind the British policy of victory -- shipping, food, manpower, finance, and the staying power of the Allies -- he called for "a thorough stock-taking" as a prerequisite for the Allies as a body "to determine the broad outline of their policy or the attitude which they ought to assume towards those who talk to them of peace."⁸²

Indeed, the War Committee had already decided to take such a stock-taking, at least as regards the British situation.⁸³ The course of events, it seems, was leading the Asquith Government towards a state where it might have to accept in principle the idea of returning to a policy of negotiation with Germany. Yet when the paper by Lansdowne led to a specific discussion of the question in the Cabinet, the conclusion was still against compromise peace. As at the War Committee meeting in March on the

House peace proposal, reliance was ultimately placed on the military authorities. Grey, like Lansdowne, had not abandoned his belief in the necessity of Victory if it were possible. Britain, he wrote on 14 November, was fighting for her existence.⁸⁴ But he did believe, as in March, that if the Allied situation would not improve, then settlement with Germany should be considered. It was a question, he stated in a memorandum on 27 November, "not of sentiment nor of rhetoric, but of cold, hard fact."⁸⁵ But the military answer -- given by Robertson in a paper on the 24th -- had been largely in terms of generalities. The Government, said Robertson -- encouraged by his civilian chief, Lloyd George, to give a firm reply to Lansdowne's "terrible paper" -- need pay no attention to the "miserable members of society" who suggest that Britain could not or should not carry on the war to ultimate victory.⁸⁶

Largely on the basis of Robertson's generalities, the principle proposed by Lansdowne was put aside for the time being.⁸⁷ The decision was in fact the last word of the Coalition Government on the question of compromise peace, for on 8 December Asquith was replaced by Lloyd George. This decision, rather than the reaction to the German and American peace notes of December, was the key point in the question of settlement with Germany in December and January. Lloyd George and Balfour, who "saw no alternative but to accept" when Lloyd George offered him the position of

Foreign Secretary, merely carried on the basic foreign policy established and maintained by the Liberal Government and the First Coalition, under the guidance of Grey -- defence against the German threat through decisive victory and settlement with the Allies and the United States.⁸⁸

At the end of September, the basic point of disagreement between Grey and Lloyd George was on the question of conciliation towards the United States. The War Secretary did not disagree on principle with that aspect of Grey's policy: in February he had apparently cultivated House's favour almost as much as Grey. But in the autumn his concern was largely for cultivating the favour of British public opinion, which harboured antipathy towards the idea of interference by the United States and which was strongly in favour of a thorough defeat of Germany, its appetite apparently whetted by the fierce action in the summer and autumn. In Beaverbrook's words, "in some vague and inspired manner (Lloyd George) represented all those forces of national energy which were determined on a complete victory."⁸⁹ Hence the "knock-out blow" interview with the American journalist Roy Howard on 28 September, in which he criticised both settlement with Germany and interference by the United States in the peace question.⁹⁰ To this Grey responded with a rebuke. "It has always been my view," he wrote to Lloyd George the following day, in a letter which tersely described his general policy towards Germany and the United States,

. . . that until the Allies were sure of victory the door should be kept open for Wilson's mediation. It is now closed for ever as far as we are concerned. I am still anxious about the effect of submarine warfare.⁹¹

And to the Cabinet on 18 October Grey expressed the hope that in view of "the very electric condition of the political atmosphere in America," his colleagues would agree with him that no further interviews should be given for the American press until after the Presidential Election.⁹²

Lloyd George was also anxious about the Allied prospects in the autumn of 1916. "We are going to lose this war," he told Hankey frankly on 9 November.⁹³ Thus his "knock-out blow" stance -- taken, he has argued, because he "felt it vitally important to throw out a sharp challenge to the defeatist spirit" -- verged on the irresponsible.⁹⁴ But he attributed the unpromising Allied situation largely to the lack of vigour and decisiveness of the Asquith Government. He had a blind faith in his own power and that of the British nation to save the situation -- and also that strong belief in righteousness so typical of the general British attitude.⁹⁵

"I felt," he told the Labour deputation on 7 December

. . . that we were not waging the war in the way wars alone can be waged. . . . once you are in it, you have to go grimly through it, otherwise the causes which hang upon it will all perish.⁹⁶

Though Lloyd George would have stated otherwise, giving his "causes" in liberalistic terms, the main cause

which had hung upon the British war effort was the preservation of Britain's broad strategic-political position in the world. Particularly in 1917 and 1918 there was a current of thought which offered the idea that the increase in British power which came through the war could mean less need for friends to preserve this position. It was argued by the General Staff in March, 1917, for instance, that all the recent changes showed a need for the British Empire "to depend more and more on her own efforts and less and less on the co-operation of her Allies," and certainly the first Imperial War Conference was full of the theme of Imperial self-sufficiency.⁹⁷ But in 1914-1916 Grey was preoccupied with shattering German military power as a means of making Germany less dangerous and of keeping Britain's friends on the Continent from German domination, a point of view essentially shared by his successor.⁹⁸

The problem in late 1916, however, was that to many the results of the Somme offensive showed that the trunk was indeed too strong to fell; hence greater attention to the branches. Britain's Imperial position and her overseas trade could be threatened in a different manner than through domination of Western Europe, as envisioned by Grey in 1915, when he pointed out that such domination would mean the obligation, "in every question that arose, to do what Germany told us; to go out of Egypt if she chose; to arrange our tariffs to suit her; and generally to give way to her in everything."⁹⁹ The C.I.D. committee

on territorial changes pointed out in March, 1917, for instance, that Germany, now aware of the effectiveness of the long-range submarine, could develop powerful submarine bases in East and West Africa, "and the immunity which we have so far enjoyed in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans would be at an end."¹⁰⁰ Similarly, a War Office paper of January, 1917, pointed out that if Constantinople remained in German control at the end of the war, "the maintenance of adequate garrisons for the defence of Mesopotamia and Egypt would place an intolerable strain upon our resources."¹⁰¹ Germany's control of Turkey after the war, Mark Sykes had earlier argued, would mean "having England at her mercy within a decade."¹⁰²

Such considerations had already come into play in connection with the peace question of November-December, 1916, when preparations were apparently being made in the Foreign Office in case a negotiated peace became necessary. On 27 December a letter from Louis Mallet to Sir Eric Drummond, whom Balfour took over from Grey as personal secretary, referred to two Colonial Office memoranda on retention of the German colonies and the Admiralty's agreement with the conclusions. "If H(is) M(ajesty's) G(overnment) are impressed by the C(olonial) O(ffice) arguments, "Mallet added,

. . . it would seem to make a peace on terms somewhat difficult at the present stage and it would be very awkward to tell Mr Wilson of our intentions. I fear he would never understand our reasons. Perhaps this supplies an argument for not acceding to his requests.¹⁰³

Grey, as shown in the discussion of the Lansdowne memorandum, would not have accepted at this stage the idea of a peace on terms which did not imply Allied success; but the idea of not acceding to Wilson's request was not in accordance with his principles of policy, which Balfour generally followed. As was the case for British war aims in the specific areas of the Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East, formulation of Britain's war aims in general in a more definite manner came, reluctantly, from the need to adapt policy, as far as possible, to the wishes of other Powers, in this case the United States. On 26 November Grey wrote that he should "leave the peace articles and President of the United States alone," for the British Government could not encourage his mediation without being prepared to accept it. "On the other hand," he continued, I see no reason why we should incur all the odium of refusing it in advance." Therefore, if Wilson made any proposal, Grey would advise the Government to suggest to the Allies that they state the minimum conditions to be laid down on which they would accept mediation or begin discussion of peace terms.¹⁰⁴

On 12 December, when the question arose as to British policy towards the German peace proposal, Grey gave his advice in a letter to Drummond, which showed his traditional concern for agreement with the Allies and the United States, as well as his doubts about Allied prospects. Firstly, the Government should let the

Allies be the first to suggest what answer should be given to the German peace proposal -- a reflection of his concern to pass some of the onus of continuing the war to the Allies; secondly, the Government should give an answer in common with the Allies; thirdly, they should

. . . let the Allies know the exact prospect as regards shipping and finance before a final decision is taken, otherwise one or more of the Allies, when they find the prospect out after having refused Germany's offer, will say they have been let in (sic) and will go for a seperate peace.

Finally, Grey called for a thorough examination of the merchant shipping question.¹⁰⁵

In fact the British Government's reaction to the German peace note reflected little of the concern of Grey and Lansdowne that there be a thorough stock-taking of the Allied situation before an answer was given. But Grey's line was followed with respect to the Allies and the United States. On 13 December, by which time the news of the German offer for peace negotiations had been learned only through the press, Lloyd George's new War Cabinet decided only that it should meet as soon as possible after receipt of the actual German peace proposals, foreseeing that "in all probability it may be necessary to summon a Conference of the Allies to consider the nature of the reply."¹⁰⁶ After soundings in the various Allied and neutral countries by the British representatives, the German peace note and the opinions gathered were considered by the War Cabinet on 18 December,

together with a paper by Robert Cecil, who pointed out that the German peace note, for British policy, mainly concerned relations with the Allies and the United States and that the answer "should have chiefly in view the effect it will have on public opinion in Allied countries and on the mind of the President of the United States."¹⁰⁷ Accordingly, Lloyd George's statement in the House of Commons on 19 December, given after both the Russian and French Governments had publicly answered the German proposal, took the form of a statement of Allied solidarity. "I simply stand here today, on behalf of the Government," he asserted, "to give clear and definite support to the statements which (the French and Russian Governments) have already made."¹⁰⁸ Like the replies of France and Russia, it represented a clear restatement of the Peace-of-Victory policy. On 30 December the Allied identic note reasserted the basis of this policy, and, when compared with the German note which emphasized German military and economic success, illustrated the basic difference in the attitudes of the rival groups of powers. "At the present moment," it stated,

. . . these sham offers on the part of Germany rest on a "War Map" of Europe alone, which represents nothing more than a superficial and passing phase of the situation, and not the real strength of the belligerents.¹⁰⁹

As for the offer of negotiations, the absence of any indication of terms in the German note indicated insincerity, and the Allied Governments "refuse to

consider a proposal which is empty and insincere." The Allied note, in turn, did not further the cause of negotiation, for it referred to the Allied aims only in vague generalities. No peace was possible, it declared, without reparation of violated rights and liberties and recognition of the principle of nationalities and of the free existence of small States. As for policy towards Germany and the question of future security, it declared that no peace were possible so long as the Allies had not brought about

. . . a settlement calculated to end, once and for all, forces which have constituted a perpetual menace to the nations, and to afford the only effective guarantees for the future security of the world.¹¹⁰

The language was more guarded, but this was essentially a repetition of Asquith's assertion in November, 1914, and subsequently that there would be no peace till Prussian militarism were destroyed.¹¹¹

Allied war aims were given in greater detail on 16 January, 1917, in reply to President Wilson's peace note of 18 December. Like the reply to the German note, this was the product of a common foreign policy towards the United States. Based on drafts by Balfour and Cecil reworked by French draftsmen, it was "subjected to some hours' hammering at the hands of a Joint Committee," and then went the rounds of the Allies for further additions or corrections before being put in final form.¹¹² The concrete war aims were predictable. The note called first of all for those changes in the existing situation, or

"war map", which restored the status quo ante. But there were also demands for compensations and just reparations for the countries whose territory had been invaded -- Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Roumania, France and Russia -- together with demands for revision of the territorial status quo at the expense of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey.¹¹³

The specific aims described in the Note, however, were largely irrelevant to the question of peace, except as symbols of Allied victory -- as they had been throughout the war. The tone and content of the German peace note and of the Allied replies to this and the American note showed the great gulf still separating the warring groups. In his note to the belligerent powers Wilson stated the essence of the American point of view about the war in asserting that "the concrete objects for which it is being waged have never been definitely stated."¹¹⁴ But the point was that the war was not being waged for concrete objects, but for an intangible one -- Victory. As Balfour pointed out in a despatch to the British Ambassador in Washington, accompanying a translation of the Allied note -- significantly, issued initially in French --

. . . the main conditions which rendered possible the calamities from which the world is now suffering . . . were the existence of a Great Power consumed with the lust of domination, in the midst of a community of nations ill-prepared for defence.

The British people, therefore, "do not believe that peace can be durable if it be not based on the success of the Allied cause." A necessary condition for a durable peace, he added, was that "the aggressive aims and the unscrupulous methods of the Central Powers should fall into disrepute among their own peoples."¹¹⁵ In a memorandum written the same day, the American Ambassador in London -- throughout the war a faithful representative of the general British point of view -- expressed again this characteristic attitude on the question of compromise peace. Wilson, he stated,

. . . does not at all understand (or, if he do, so much the worse for him) that the Entente Powers, especially Great Britain and France, cannot make "peace without victory." If they do they will become vassals of Germany.¹¹⁶

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

¹A.J. Balfour to R.B. Haldane, 4 Aug., 1914; Balfour Papers, British Museum Add. Mss. 49724.

²Grey to Sir F. Bertie, 29 July, 1914, No. 509; G.P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, British Documents on the Origins of the War, Vol. XI (London: H.M.S.O., 1926), No. 283, p. 180.

³It was largely a foregone conclusion that the ultimatum on Belgium would lead to war. "Another ultimatum has been sent to Germany as a consequence of which the Ambassador will ask for his passports," Churchill wrote on the 4th, for an Admiralty official. "The question is what time should the rupture take place. At what time of daylight or darkness would it be most convenient to begin hostilities." Minute by Churchill, 4 Aug., 1914; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/375. See also Cameron Hazlehurst, Politicians at War July 1914 to May 1915 (London: Cape, 1971), pp. 101, 102.

⁴Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan, 28 July, 1914; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/375. Note also Sir M. de Bunsen to Grey, 1 Aug., 1914, No. 138; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 450, p. 261: "There is great anxiety in Vienna to know what England will do. I reply always that no one can say, but England cannot be expected to abandon her friends."

⁵"Speech by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons on August 3, 1914", Appendix D in Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), p. 299.

⁶C.J. Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists, Vol. I (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 196. On the radical opposition to Grey's Entente policy see H.S. Weinroth, "The British Radicals and the Balance of Power 1902-1914", The Historical Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (1970), pp. 653-682.

⁷Grey to Sir E. Goschen, (Berlin), 24 June, 1914, No. 197; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 4, pp. 4-6.

⁸ Lord Hugh Cecil to Lord Robert Cecil, 10 Jan., 1915; B.M. Add. Mss. 51157. Churchill, Asquith, Grey and Haldane, Cecil felt, would probably welcome a coalition. Though Churchill "would be a very uncomfortable person to work with" and Asquith "behaved so mendaciously that it is very repugnant to my feelings to contemplate any co-operation with him," Cecil saw graver objections to co-operating with any other group of politicians, and such a coalition policy would save them from both Lloyd George -- "a leader very well qualified for the task of stirring up a dangerous spirit of class bitterness" -- and "the mad Imperialists" of the Unionist Party, as represented by the Morning Post and the National Review. There was a certain danger, he felt, "that you and I should become too particular for this world; and that by combining objections arising from fiscal controversy, the defence of the Church, women's suffrage, and personal antipathies, we should be driven into a position of splendid isolation." See also Hazlehurst, pp. 158, 159.

⁹ R.W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914 (Cambridge: University Press, 1937), p. 593. See also I.H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (London: Athlone, 1966), pp. 224, 241. Lord Lansdowne was Foreign Secretary in Lord Salisbury's last ministry.

¹⁰ Seton-Watson, p. 632

¹¹ Lowe, Vol. I, p. 632.

¹² Seton-Watson, pp. 582-584.

¹³ Nish pp. 202-282.

¹⁴ On the Pamir settlement see Lowe, Vol I, pp. 187-190.

¹⁵ For British policy towards the Russo-Japanese war, see Nish, pp. 283-298.

¹⁶ As regards the British attitude on the effect of military defeat and domestic upheaval on Russia's position as a Great power, the Director of Military Operations, as late as August, 1911, felt that Russian assistance in a European war would be "more imaginary than real." Henry Wilson, Memorandum for the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 11 Aug., 1911; WO 106/47A&B.

¹⁷L.S. Amery, My Political Life, Vol. II (London: Hutchinson, 1953), p. 104.

¹⁸A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), pp. 427-431.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 432-433. Seton-Watson, pp. 601, 602, 607. For an example of the attitude of general suspicion towards German policy see Grey's letter to President Roosevelt in December, 1906, in Trevelyan page 115. The British people, Grey wrote, "do resent mischief making. They suspect the Emperor of aggressive plans of Weltpolitik, and they see or think they see that Germany is forcing the peace in armaments in order to dominate Europe. . . ."

²⁰Minute by Sir Charles Hardinge, 23 Feb., 1906, on Grey, Memorandum on Morocco, 20 Feb., 1906; B.D., Vol. III, No. 299, pp. 266-268. Hardinge was at this time Permanent Undersecretary.

²¹Minute by Grey, 9 June, 1906, on articles on Baghdad Railway in Morning Post, 9 June, and Times, 9 June; B.D., Vol. III, No. 418, p. 359.

²²Balfour to Prothero, 7 Apr., 1916; Balfour Papers, B,M, Add. Mss. 49864: "You seem to have lent the weight of your authority to one misapprehension, namely, that the Entente between France and this country, so far at least as concerns Morocco, was anti-German in its tendencies, and was designed to exclude that country from any influence in Moroccan affairs. This is, however, not the case." Grey to Nicolson, 21 Dec., 1905, Private; B.D., Vol. III, No. 200, P. 162, illustrates that by the end of 1905, however, Morocco had come to play a role in the general political situation, largely as a symbol or test. If France could succeed in getting a special position in Morocco with British help, Grey wrote, "it will be a great success for the Anglo-French Entente; if she fails the prestige of the Entente will suffer and its vitality will be diminished." For this reason the main object of British policy was "to help France to carry her point at the Conference."

²³Taylor, pp. 412-414. The negotiations for the Anglo-French agreement are described in detail in P.J. Rolo, Entente Cordiale (London: MacMillan, 1969), pp. 171-270.

²⁴Fourth Marquis of Salisbury to Balfour, 9 Nov., 1905; C.J. Lowe, Reluctant Imperialists, Vol. II, p. 139. "Circumstances no doubt have driven us in respect to France further than we intended," Salisbury wrote. But for the last twenty years the British had been engaged with different Powers, notably with Germany and with France, in adjusting conflicting claims and in bargaining to get rid of causes of friction, and he would treat the agreement with France "rather as a development of past policy than as a new departure." On French policy, see C. Andrew, Theophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale (London; MacMillan, 1968). See also Rolo, p.277.

²⁵Grey comments on the resignation of Delcassé in Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years, Vol. I, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), p. 93.

²⁶The development of the Anglo-French military conversations is described in detail in S.R. Williamson, The Politics of Grand Strategy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp. 59-88. Grey to Bertie, 10 Jan., 1906, No. 22, Very Confidential; B.D., Vol. III, No. 210, pp. 170,171. D. Collins, Aspects of British Politics, 1904-1919 (Oxford: Pergamon, 1965), p. 28.

²⁷Grey to Bertie, 10 Jan., 1906, No. 22, Very Confidential; Grey to Bertie, 15 Jan., 1906, No. 33, Very Confidential; B.D., Vol. III, Nos. 210, 215, pp. 170, 171,177. Williamson, p. 76. David Lloyd George, War Memoirs, Vol. I (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1933), pp. 46-48.

²⁸Williamson, p. 113. For an example of such a cut-and-dried approach in the July Crisis see C.F. Adam, Lord Lloyd (London: MacMillan, 1948), pp. 58-60. To George Lloyd, Adam writes, "it was extremely difficult to comprehend the possibility that any Government in power, confronted with a situation so threatening, should not at once declare its sympathies and intentions. . . ." Lloyd, a soldier influential in the Unionist Party, played a role in organizing Unionist support for the policy of intervention. Two other military men, Henry Wilson and Leopold Amery, were also of considerable influence amongst the Unionists. Adam, pp. 59,60.

²⁹See Williamson, pp. 167-204 on the British reaction to Germany's policy in the Agadir crisis.

³⁰ Seton-Watson, pp. 622-625. Rolo, p. 280, refers to "Great Britain's anxiety about the possibility of too great an improvement in Franco-German relations."

³¹ See Grey's account of the incident in the House of Commons on 27 November, 1911. There was no communication from the German Government from 4 July, when Grey raised the question of German policy with the German Ambassador, to 24 July. Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons, 27 Nov., 1911; B.D., Vol. VII, No. 721, pp. 725-735. On 18 July when the British Government learned of the terms of settlement with France which Germany was seeking, Sir Eyre Crowe of the Foreign Office minuted, "if (Germany's) demands are acceded to. . . . it will mean definitely the subjection of France. The conditions demanded are not such as a country having an independent foreign policy can possibly accept. The details of the terms are not so very important now." Minute by Crowe, 18 July, 1911, on Bertie to Grey, 18 July, 1911, No. 103 Very Urgent; B.D., Vol. VII, No. 392, p. 371. On the role of the Morocco question per se as a factor in British policy, note also Churchill to Grey, 30 Aug., 1911; Churchill, Vol I, pp. 65, 66: "Our interests are European and not Moroccan." Churchill suggested that if and when the Morocco negotiations failed, Grey should propose to France and Russia a triple alliance "to safeguard (inter alia) the independence of Belgium, Holland, and Denmark."

³² Grey to Count de Salis (Berlin), 3 July, 1911, No. 127 Confidential; B.D., Vol. VII, No. 347, p. 328. See also Seton-Watson, p. 623.

³³ Extract from speech of Mr Lloyd George on July 21, 1911, at the Mansion House; B.D., Vol. VII, No. 412. p. 391.

³⁴ Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons.

³⁵ There are numerous papers written in 1911 on the possibility of war with Germany in WO 106/47A&B, for example Henry Wilson, "Appreciation of the Political and Military Situation in Europe," 20 Sept., 1911, in which Wilson tersely sums up the general situation as follows:

"In the particular case under consideration, Germany will go to war in order to gain the powers of expansion deemed necessary for the future of its Empire.

"France, and Russia, and England will go to war in order to keep the status quo and present Balance of Power.

"It is a matter of vital importance to France and England, and of great, if not vital, interest to Russia that Germany should not be allowed to gain a more dominating position in Europe than that in which she now stands." On the naval talks see Williamson, pp. 277-248.

³⁶Williamson, p. 248.

³⁷E.L. Woodward, Great Britain and the Germany Navy (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935), pp. 312-320. O.J. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy (Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1964) pp. 389-415. See also Roy Jenkins, Asquith (London: Collins, 1914) p. 324: "From 1911 onwards the European scene was menacing, and in a general way was recognised as such by Asquith and his leading ministers." On the British reaction to the German navy laws of 1900, 1906, and 1908 and to the German Emperor's speech at Reval in 1904, see Churchill, Vol. I, p. 38. On the naval controversy in the Spring of 1909 Churchill writes, "Genuine alarm was excited throughout the country by what was for the first time widely recognised as a German menace."

³⁸Minute by Crowe, 28 May, 1906, on Sir F. Lascelles to Grey, 24 May, 1906, No. 151, Confidential; B.D., Vol. III, No. 416, p. 357. "All this talking about an 'understanding' between the two countries," Crowe wrote, "has an air of unreality. We have come to an understanding with France, and there may be one with Russia. But the essential thing in both cases is a common ground of action or negotiation. There were actual differences to be adjusted with France; an understanding with Russia would presumably mean a removal of similar differences." But an understanding which did not consist of the removal of differences could only mean a plan of co-operation in political transactions, whether offensive, defensive, or for the maintenance of neutrality, and it was difficult, he felt, to see on what point such co-operation was at that moment appropriate. "Past history has shown us that a friendly Germany has usually been a Germany asking for something, by way of proving our friendship." Grey added that all that was necessary was for the Germans "to realize that they have got nothing to complain of." In this regard, see also T.A. Bayer, England and der neue Kurs, 1890-1895 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1955,) who argues that the very lack of differences between England and Germany was a factor in the developing rivalry.

³⁹On the Haldane mission see Seton-Watson, pp. 629-631; G.M. Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937) pp. 228-231; Woodward, pp. 323-337; Williamson, pp. 249-263.

⁴⁰Wilson, "Memorandum for the C.I.G.S.", 11 Aug., 1911; WO 106/47A&B.

⁴¹Goschen to Grey, 29 July, 1914, No. 102, Secret and Urgent; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 293, pp. 185,186/

⁴²Seton-Watson, p. 632. Rolo, p. 280. See also Grey to Roosevelt, 20 Oct., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 141. "We had, I thought, during the Balkan crisis of a year ago or so, made some progress towards getting the European groups of Powers together. We got on very well with Germany at that time. . . ."

⁴³Nicolson to de Bunsen, 6 July, 1914; Nicolson to de Bunsen, 20 July, 1914; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/375.

⁴⁴Nicolson to de Bunsen, 6 July, 1914; ibid.

⁴⁵Seton-Watson, p. 642. M.S. Anderson, The Eastern Question (London: MacMillan, 1966), pp. 266,267.

⁴⁶Grey to Goschen, 24 June, 1914, No. 197; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 4, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁷Grey to Buchanan, 25 July, 1914, No. 353; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 112, pp. 86,87. Grey approved Buchanan's language in his interview with Sazonov on 24 July, when the Ambassador stated that England had no direct interests in Serbia and public opinion in England would never sanction a war on her behalf. Buchanan to Grey, 24 July, 1914, No. 166, Urgent; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 101, pp. 80,81. On 21 July Grey told Cambon that Berlin was probably trying to moderate Vienna. Grey to Bertie, 21 July, 1914, No. 478; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 72, p. 59.

⁴⁸Grey to Sir H. Rumbold, 24 July, 1914, No. 196; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 99, p. 78.

⁴⁹Grey to Buchanan, 25 July, 1914, No. 353; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 112, pp. 86,87. It was "almost inevitable", in Grey's view, "that in a very short time Austria and Russia will both have mobilised against each other." The key question, of course, was that of Russian mobilisation against Germany. L. Albertini, The Origins of the War of 1914 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952) p. 340, attacks Grey's mediation policy, stating that it was "a ridiculous idea to think that, if Russia mobilised, the German Government would wait with folded arms and act the peacemaker," and that the wisest policy would have been to emphasise the likelihood of British intervention against Germany in the event of war. It was in fact pointed out to the Russian Government by Buchanan on 25 July that "if Russia mobilised, Germany would not be content with mere mobilisation, or give Russia time to carry out hers, but would probably declare war at once." Buchanan to Grey, 25 July, 1914, No. 169, Very Confidential; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 125, pp. 93,94. If British policy was consistent, one must assume Buchanan referred to mobilisation against Germany.

⁵⁰Grey minute on Sir H. Rumbold to Grey, 24 July, 1914, No. 89, Confidential: B.D., Vol. XI, No. 103, p. 83. This telegram which arrived at 11 p.m. on 24 July, contained the information that Jagow, the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had suggested to the French Ambassador that it was for the Entente Powers to advise moderation and compliance at Belgrade and had stated only that the question of an attempt by Berlin to enjoin moderation on Vienna "would depend on circumstances."

⁵¹Buchanan to Grey, 24 July, 1914, No. 166, Urgent: B.D., Vol. XI, No. 101, pp. 80,81.

⁵²Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe on Buchanan to Grey, 24 July, 1914, No. 166, Urgent: ibid., pp. 81,82.

⁵³Grey minuted, after Crowe and Nicolson's comments, that he thought it was premature to make any statement to France and Russia on British solidarity with them. Ibid., p. 82. Nicolson was more concerned than Grey about the effects of the British attitude on Russia. "Our attitude during the crisis," he wrote in his minute, "will be regarded by Russia as a test and we must be most careful not to alienate her." On 29 July, however, Grey told Cambon that in a struggle for supremacy between Teuton and Slav, the British would not feel called to intervene. Grey to Bertie, 29 July, 1914, No. 509; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 283, p. 180. On 10 September, 1914, Grey wrote to

Roosevelt, "if the Germans win, Prussian militarism will dominate the whole of Europe, with the exception of Russia, who will remain a Power in the East of Europe and in Asia." Grey, Vol. II, pp. 138,139

⁵⁴Grey to de Bunsen, 23 July, 1914, No. 121; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 86, pp. 70,71.

⁵⁵Goschen to Nicolson, July, 1914 (received 5 Sept., 1914), Private; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 677, pp. 361-363.

⁵⁶Bertie to Grey, 30 July, 1914, Private; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 320, pp. 202,203.

⁵⁷Buchanan to Nicolson, 3 Aug., 1914; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/375.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Grey, Memorandum on Morocco, 20 Feb., 1906; B.D., Vol. III, No. 299, pp. 266-268.

⁶⁰Grey, Vol. II, p. 312.

⁶¹Buchanan to Grey, 25 July, 1914, No. 169 Very Confidential; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 125, pp. 93,94.

⁶²Grey to Goschen, 29 July, 1914, No. 253; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 286, pp. 182,183.

⁶³Goschen to Grey, 29 July, 1914, No. 102 Secret and Urgent; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 293, pp. 185,186.

⁶⁴Grey to Goschen, No. 231, 30 July, 1914, No. 231; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 303, pp. 193,194. The political significance of military victory in itself -- or even of humiliating diplomatic victory -- was key to the situation at every level. To Mensdorff, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, Grey used similar language to describe the Austro-Serbian situation: "it would be quite possible, without nominally interfering with the independence of Serbia or taking away any of her territory, to turn her into a sort of vassal State." Grey to de Bunsen, 29 July, 1914, No. 128; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 282, pp. 179,180.

⁶⁵Grey to Goschen, 31 July, 1914, No. 241; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 340, pp. 215,216.

⁶⁶Grey to Sir Cecil Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 116

⁶⁷Grey to Roosevelt, 18 Dec., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 142.

⁶⁸Grey to Bertie, 31 July, 1914, No. 513; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 367, pp. 226,227.

⁶⁹Grey to Bertie, 29 July, 1914, No. 509; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 283, p. 180. Grey to Bertie, 1 Aug., 1914, No. 518; ibid., No. 447, p. 260. In the interview with Grey on 1 August, Cambon accurately described the British position as regards the political necessity to adapt British policy towards Germany to that of France: "If (the British) did not help France, the Entente would disappear; and, whether victory came to Germany or to France and Russia, our situation at the end of the war would be very uncomfortable." Grey "admitted the force of this," but said it was for the British Government to consider the point of what British interests required, and to deal with it in Parliament.

⁷⁰Grey to Bertie, 2 Aug., 1914, No. 303; B.D., Vol. XI, No. 487, pp. 274,275.

⁷¹Grey, Memorandum on Morocco, 20 Feb., 1906; B.D., Vol. III, No. 299, pp. 266-268.

⁷²David Lloyd George War Memoirs, Vol. I (Boston: Little, Brown, 1933) p. 47.

⁷³Amery, Vol. II, p. 13. See also D. Collins, Aspects of British Politics, 1904-1919 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1965) pp. 57,86.

⁷⁴J.A. Spender, Life, Journalism and Politics Vol. II, (London: Cassell, 1927), p. 18.

⁷⁵Trevelyan, p. 249.

⁷⁶Grey to Spring Rice, 18 Jan., 1915; Grey Papers, FO 800/85. On the role of the Belgian issue as an influence on the general liberal attitude towards British intervention, see also Hazlehurst, pp. 57-77,82,97, and Trevor Wilson (ed.), The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott 1911-1928 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970), pp. 91-99.

⁷⁷Trevelyan, p. 314.

⁷⁸Williamson, p. 108.

⁷⁹Cecil to Grigg, 11 Aug., 1914; Cecil Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 51161.

⁸⁰Speech by Sir Edward Grey; Grey, Vol. II, p. 295.

⁸¹1st Earl of Oxford and Asquith, Speeches by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith (London: Hutchinson, 1927), pp. 204-212.

⁸²George Cadbury to A.G. Gardiner, 27 Nov., 1914; A.G. Gardiner, Life of George Cadbury (London: Cassell, n.d.), p. 252.

⁸³B.J. Hendrick, The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page, Vol. I, (Garden City: Doubleday, Page, & Co., 1924), p. 431

⁸⁴D.H. Lawrence, in conversation with Lady Cynthia Asquith; Lady Cynthia Asquith, Diaries, 1915-1916 (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 89. The quotation is Lady Cynthia's paraphrase. "The war is driving him quite mad with rage --" she also wrote, " he just sits and gibbers with fury."

⁸⁵George E.G. Catlin, "Monstrously Unnecessary", Promise of Greatness (New York: Day, 1968) p. 405: " . . . it was not until the spring of 1918, the March offensive, that there was a public sense that 'it was all touch-and-go.'"

⁸⁶Benckendorff to Sazonov, 9 Nov., 1914; W.W. Gottlieb, Studies in Secret Diplomacy during the First World War (London: Allen & Unwin, 1957), p. 70.

⁸⁷War Memoirs, Vol. I, p.2.

⁸⁸Herbert Samuel to Mrs. Samuel, 2 Aug., 1914; Samuel Papers, A/157/697. Note also Mensdorff to Berchtold, 7 Aug., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 233: "Grey is in despair at the shattering of his efforts to keep the peace."

⁸⁹Grey, Memorandum on Morocco, 20 Feb., 1906; B.D., Vol. III, No. 299, pp. 266-267.

⁹⁰Grey to Spring Rice, 18 Sept., 1914; Stephen Gwynn, The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice (London: Constable, 1929), p. 224. See also Grey to Roosevelt, 10 Sept., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 139. Grey to Sir Francis Blake, 14 Oct., 1914; Trevelyan, p. 271. Spender, Vol. II, p.12, discusses the reasons for general belief in a deliberate German war policy: "The thing seemed incredible and impossible -- first, the ultimatum, so outrageously beyond anything that the facts seemed to warrant, then the obstinate closing of the door against any and every proposal that might have kept the peace." Collins, p. 241, discussing the attitude of Northcliffe towards the war, points to the connection between the belief in a deliberately aggressive German policy and the British policy of seeking definite victory before discussion of peace terms.

⁹¹Grey to Mrs. Creighton, April, 1918; Trevelyan, p. 250.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

¹ E.S. Montagu, "The Problems of Peace", 29 Aug., 1916; Cab 42/18/7.

² For example see Charles Seymour, The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, Vol. II (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1926), p. 87, and V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism", V.I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow: Foreign Language Press, 1964), pp. 189, 190. Lenin maintained that his pamphlet proved that "the war of 1914-1918 was imperialist (that is, an annexationist, predatory, war of plunder, on the part of both sides; it was a war for the division of the world, for the partition and repartition of colonies and spheres of influence of finance capital, etc." A more recent example is found in H.M. Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924 (New York: Knopf, 1969), p. 86. See also A.J.P. Taylor, The First World War (London: 1965), p. 72. The "side shows", he states, "themselves became a prime motive for a British mass army and mass slaughter in France, though they had been conceived in the first place to make these unnecessary." His argument is that, as the war progressed, the need to lull the suspicions of France while Britain added to her Empire became a major factor behind the large British military presence on the Continent.

³ Balfour to Haldane, 4 Aug., 1914; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49724. "If . . . the Germans are in sufficiently overwhelming numbers to inflict on France a crushing defeat, the whole future of Europe may be changed in a direction we should regard as disastrous." The immediate despatch of all the British divisions could make the difference, Balfour thought. In his strategic memorandum of 11 Aug., 1911, WO 106/47A&B, Henry Wilson concluded "that in a single handed war France would in all human probability be defeated, Holland and Belgium might be annexed by Germany, a huge indemnity (say one thousand million pounds) would be placed on France who would also lose some of her colonies." The result would be that Germany "would then attain to that dominant position which . . . it is an axiom of this country not to tolerate," and it would therefore be impossible, he argued, for England to remain neutral in such a war. If England took an active part with the French, "the result in the opening moves might be doubtful but the longer the war lasted the greater the strain would be on Germany," for the English and French fleets would

command the sea, "with the result that the chief fiscal dislocation and commercial loss will fall on Germany." In another memorandum written the following day (WO 106/47 A&B), Wilson argued that provided the British mobilised the same day as France, sent all six divisions, and was able to maintain the effectives throughout the war, "a war between Germany on the one hand and France and England on the other, with Russia of course playing her part, might, I think, end in the defeat of Germany."

⁴Grey, Vol. II, pp. 155,156.

⁵Ibid., pp. 156-158. Grey referred to this Russian diplomatic defeat in a letter to Roosevelt on 13 March, 1915: " . . . the Germans contend that we ought to have gone to Russia and told her that the "shining armour" was out, as it was in 1909, and that she must submit to another diplomatic humiliation, such as she had submitted to then: a thing that no great nation could stand twice, especially after it had been rubbed into them as it was by the Kaiser's speech in Vienna in 1909." Grey, Vol. II, p. 151.

⁶Grey, Memorandum on the war situation: Reply to Sir William Robertson's paper of 24 November, 27 Nov., 1916; Cab. 37/160/20.

⁷Grey, II, p. 152.

⁸Ibid., p. 159. Grey told W.H. Page, the American Ambassador, that the agreement was an obvious one: "when three countries were at war on the same side, one of them could not honourably make special terms." Grey to Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914, ibid., pp. 115,116. On the German attitude towards Britain see Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 25, 83-87,120-122,156.

⁹Grey to Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914, Grey, Vol. II, pp. 158,159.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 158.

¹¹Grey to Barclay, 7 Aug., 1914; ibid., pp. 157,158.

¹² Lord Bryce to President Wilson, 24 Sept., 1914; H.A.L. Fisher, James Bryce, Vol. II (London: MacMillan, 1927), p. 130. It was the opinion of "the wisest friends of peace on this side of the Ocean," Bryce wrote, that Wilson was right in not renewing his offer of mediation at that time. (See below, p. 84). "The general feeling is -- and though one of those who worked hard for peace up to the last, I share it -- that any attempt to patch up a peace now could only lead to a sort of truce rather than peace, an uneasy respite during which preparations for renewing the struggle would go on, armaments growing larger and engines of destruction still more deadly." On Grey's views of the role of armaments in the coming of war, see Grey, Vol. I, pp. 92.93.

¹³ Grey to Spring Rice, 2 Jan., 1915; Trevelyan, p. 315. "German Government single us out for special animosity and work up hatred against us in Germany by the most unjust charge that we were responsible for this war and the aggressors in it. A peace made while this temper continues, would leave us exposed to certain attack unless we spent even more largely than before on armaments."

¹⁴ Grey, Vol. I, p. 93.

¹⁵ W.R. Robertson, Appreciation of the war situation, 24 Nov., 1916; Cab. 371/160/19.

¹⁶ Grey to Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 115, 116.

¹⁷ Speeches, pp. 223, 224.

¹⁸ For Grey's attitude see also Sanderson to Balfour, 17 Nov., 1914; Balfour Papers, M.B. Add. Mss. 49739: "E. Grey thinks the war will lead to the triumph of the Labour Party in Germany and Austria" For Haldane's views see Haldane, "The Future Relations of the Great Powers," 8 April, 1915; Cab. 37/137/17. For Lloyd George, see for instance his memorandum of September, 1915, on the general situation. War Memoirs, Vol. I, pp. 479-483. In this paper he refers to the need to challenge and destroy the German militaristic system, especially since "the might of this military clique has exceeded the gloomiest of prognostications." See also C. Nabokoff, Ordeal of a Diplomat (London: Duckworth, 1921), p. 80.

Though ostensible liberalism was good policy, Lloyd George's first telegram to the Russian Provisional Government in 1917 nevertheless presents an illustration of his liberal predilections: it referred to the "Prussian military autocracy" as "the only barrier of peace" and stated that the principle of Liberty was "the only sure safeguard of Peace in the world."

¹⁹Hendrick, p. 315.

²⁰Grey to Spring Rice, 22 Dec., 1914; Trevelyan, p. 314.

²¹Grey to Buchanan, 19 Sept., 1914, No. 764, Most Secret; FO 371/2095/41804.

²²General Staff, "Addendum to General Staff Memorandum of 31st August, 1916," 28 Mar., 1917; WO 106/1511. On the Italian negotiations see C.J. Lowe "Britain and Italian Intervention 1914-1915," Historical Journal, Vol. XII, No. 3 (1969), pp. 533-548. Lowe refutes the argument of Gottlieb pp. 217, 219, that a British interest of defence against Russia after the war was a major factor in British policy in these negotiations; he emphasises the concern with defeating Germany. On the Roumanian agreement, see Lowe's article, "The failure of British Diplomacy in the Balkans, 1914-1916," in Canadian Journal of History, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 95-98. On British policy towards Austria-Hungary in general during the war, see H. Hanak, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary during the First World War (London: Oxford University Press,). See also Gottlieb, pp. 201, 202.

²³Grey to Barclay, 7 Aug., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 157, 158.

²⁴Buchanan to Nicolson, 13 Sept., 1914; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/375.

²⁵Asquith, Speeches, pp. 213-222.

²⁶Minutes by Crowe and Nicolson on Buchanan to Grey, 14 Aug., 1914, No. 280; FO 371/39209. Sazonov told Buchanan that a proclamation was about to be issued promising if the war should be successful, union of western Polish districts of Galicia and a large part of Posen with the Kingdom of Poland as a single entity under a lieutenant of the Emperor, together with a large measure of local autonomy and complete liberty of religion and language. For a general treatment of Russian policy see C.J. Smith, The Russian Struggle for Power, 1914-1917 (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956).

²⁷Buchanan to Grey, 26 April, 1916; FO 371/2747/37661. Sazonov told Lindley, the British Charge d'Affaires, that his proposed solution to the Polish question was a constitution for old Russian Poland "and any Polish territories Russia may gain as a result of the war."

²⁸Grey to Buchanan, 17 Aug., 1916, Personal and Secret; FO 371/2751/163007. In this telegram Grey appears pessimistic about Russia's policy in Poland because of Sazonov's fall.

²⁹Grey to Buchanan, 21 Aug., 1916, Personal and Secret; FO 371/2751/163007.

³⁰Grey, Minute on Clerk, Memorandum of conversation with Prince Woroniecki and Dr. Retinger of Polish independence movement, 21 Nov., 1916; FO 371/2747/37661.

³¹Committee of Imperial Defense, "Second Interim Report of the Sub-Committee on Territorial Changes", 22 Mar., 1917: CO 537/990.

³²Cecil to Grigg, 11 Aug. 1914; Cecil Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 51161. On 20 December, 1917, Lloyd George stated in the Commons, "When we entered this war . . . we did not enter . . . to annex a yard of anybody else's territory." Quoted in War Office, "Allied Commitments in Turkey and Armenia: Extracts from the War Aims Index of Statements by Allied, Enemy, Neutral Countries and Subject Nationalities, 1914-1918"; WO 106/1415.

³³War Office, "Brief Summary of Colonial Campaigns in the Present War", 1 Mar., 1917; Appendix (A) to C.I.D., Second Interim Report; CO 537/990. Walter Millis, Road to War (London: Faber & Faber, 1935), pp.48,62. See also W.R. Louis, Great Britain and Germany's Lost Colonies, 1914-1919 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), pp. 36,37.

³⁴Ibid.,

³⁵Ibid.,

³⁶Ibid.,

³⁷C.I.D., "Second Interim Report."

³⁸War Office, "Brief Summary".

³⁹ibid.

⁴⁰ibid.

⁴¹H.L. Smith-Dorrien, "Appreciation on Situation in East Africa", 1 Dec., 1915; WO 106/310.

⁴²War Office, "Brief Summary."

⁴³Smith-Dorrien, "Appreciation."

⁴⁴War Office, "Brief Summary."

⁴⁵Lord Methuen to Ewart, 4 Dec., 1908; WO 106/47A&B.

⁴⁶War Office, "South Africa. Military Policy in a War with Germany;" WO 106/47A&B.

⁴⁷L. Harcourt, "The Spoils," 25 Mar., 1915; Cab 37/126/27.

⁴⁸Memorandum by the Colonial Office, 3 Nov., 1916; Appendix (B) to C.I.D., "Second Interim Report".

⁴⁹Lord Curzon, "German and Turkish Territories Captured in the War. Their Future", 5 Dec., 1917; Curzon Papers, FO 800/214. As regards the economic aspect of the struggle, note, for instance, Runciman to Balfour, 14 Oct., 1915; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49716: Mr. Huth Jackson and a small committee are, at my request, investigating the whole question of German trade relations after the War, with the object of devising measures for the prevention of the effective resumption of her policy of peaceful penetration, and of checking any injurious effect upon British trade which might result from action taken by Germany to secure the re-establishment of her trade when the War is ended." See also Haldane to Balfour 8 Aug., 1918, B.M. Add. Mss. 49724: "The reasons for this war were, I think, deeper and more general than we have as yet fully realised. If Germany meant our destruction it was by a simple and more legitimate method, never that of fighting. I am far from certain that we will not owe our salvation to this war."

⁵⁰C.I.D., "First Interim Report of the Sub-Committee on Territorial Changes", 25 Jan., 1917; CO 537/985.

⁵¹C.I.D., "Second Interim Report."

⁵²Note, for instance, Sir W. Townley (The Hague) to Grey, 6 Sept., 1917, No. 2773; CO 532/100. According to a German newspaper, Townley reported, Dr. Solf, the German Colonial Secretary of State, "has repeatedly and emphatically stated that giving back of German Colonies is absolutely essential condition of peace."

⁵³Harcourt, "The Spoils". Amery, pp. 103,104.

⁵⁴Grey, Vol. II, p. 160.

⁵⁵Crowe to Undersecretary of State, Colonial Office, 23 Aug., 1914; CO 537/590. On 6 August, when Harcourt, had cabled the Governor-General of Australia that Australia would be doing "a great and urgent Imperial service" by seizing the German wireless stations at New Guinea, Yapp, in the Marshall Islands, and Nauru, on Pleasant Island, he had pointed out that "any territory now occupied must at conclusion of war be at the disposal of Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement." British and Foreign State Papers, 1915, p. 631.

⁵⁶Crowe to Undersecretary of State, Colonial Office, 19 Aug., 1914; CO 537/589.

⁵⁷Lowe, Reluctant Imperialists, Vol. I, pp. 121-127.

⁵⁸Louis, , pp. 57,148,149.

⁵⁹Memorandum by the Colonial Office, 3 Nov., 1916.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Exchange of Notes Relative to the Provisional Partition of the Cameroons, Appendix (C) of C.I.D., "Second Interim Report."

⁶³Grey to Bertie, 24 Feb., 1916, Appendix (D) of C.I.D., "Second Interim Report". This document is quoted more extensively by Louis, p. 61, from FO 371/2597.

⁶⁴Grey, "The position of Great Britain with regard to her Allies", 18 Feb., 1916: Trevelyan, pp. 317,318.

⁶⁵Harcourt, "The Spoils".

⁶⁶"Admiralty Remarks on the Claim of the Japanese to occupy the Islands captured from the Germans North of the Equator", Appendix (B) of "First Interim Report"; CO 537/985. On Anglo-Japanese relations respecting the outbreak of war see Peter Lowe, Great Britain and Japan, 1911-1915 (London: MacMillan, 1969), pp. 177-219

⁶⁷Governor-General of Australia to Secretary of State for Colonies, 7 Feb., 1917; CO 532/91

⁶⁸On the Turkish-Persian frontier, the International Boundary Commission had barely completed its work on 27 Oct., 1914, before the war with Turkey broke out. This commission, consisting of Persian, Turkish, British and Russian officials, had in effect demarcated and delimited a boundary between an Entente sphere of influence and what was becoming predominantly a German economic and political sphere of influence. "We had brought to a successful conclusion a task which had defied the efforts of at least four international commissions during the preceding century," one of the British members of the commission subsequently wrote. John Marlowe, Late Victorian: The Life of Sir Arnold Talbot Wilson (London: The Cresset Press, 1967), pp. 80-84. Ironically, once there was war between Turkey and Entente, this line became quite meaningless. On the subject of Great Power settlement in the Middle East before the war see also M.S. Anderson, The Eastern Question, pp. 266,267. Germany made economic agreements with Russia in 1911, France in February, 1914 and England in March, 1914; from July, 1913 to June, 1914, there was a series of Anglo-Turkish economic agreements, the negotiations for which had begun in 1911. The story of the Baghdad Railway, Anderson comments, "illustrates the unwillingness of the great powers to quarrel really seriously about interests which were mainly economic." In their economic aspects, the Middle East agreements of 1916 shall be seen merely as part of this general pattern of European economic expansion and settlement in the Middle East.

⁶⁹Nicolson to Hardinge, 16 Feb., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. On 26 January Nicolson wrote to Hardinge, "We are still discussing the question of the northern limits of the future Arabian State -- that shadow to which I doubt any real substance will be given." Ibid. On 28 December, 1915, Hardinge had indicated to Nicolson that he shared his scepticism about the scheme. "Pichon's complete incredulity as to the proposed Arab Kingdom is perfectly sound, for I am absolutely convinced that the whole scheme is visionary. Pichon knows what he is talking about which McMahon certainly does not." Ibid. See also Elie Kedourie, "Pan-Arabism and British Policy", The Chatham House Version and other Middle-Eastern Studies (London: Weindenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), pp. 213-215. For general treatments of British policy in the Middle East in 1914-1916 see Kedourie, England and the Middle East (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1956), pp. 29-66, J. Nevakivi Britain, France and the Arab Middle East. (London: Athlone, 1969), pp. 13-44.

⁷⁰Nicolson to Hardinge, 16 Feb., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381.

⁷¹Mallet to Grey, 27 Aug., 1914, No. 635; FO 371/2139/43500. On 28 August Clerk minuted on this telegram that Germany was "in practical control at Constantinople" and suggested that perhaps the only way to save the situation was to rush the Straits, desperate though such a solution may seem" On 3 September Mallet reported that the Russian military authorities wanted to attempt to close the Straits, but the Russian Ambassador and himself were both "strongly opposed to playing Germany's game by taking the initiative against Turkey in this manner." Mallet to Grey, 3 Sept., 1914, No. 683; FO 371/2138/38623. See also Gottlieb, p. 41.

⁷²Grey to Mallet, 11 Oct., 1914, No. 660; FO 371/2139/38623. This telegram is in answer to Mallet's No. 956 of 10 October (ibid.) in which Mallet suggests the British "should continue to devote ourselves to countering German-Austrian intrigues which we have done successfully for two months." Developments in the Shatt-el-Arab," he added, "are in this connection, causing me anxiety."

⁷³Grey to Mallet, 17 Oct., 1914, No. 681; FO 371/2142/50458.

⁷⁴Mallet to Grey, 7 Oct., 1914, No. 941; Mallet to Grey, 7 Oct., 1914, No. 942; Grey to Mallet, 10 Oct., 1914, No. 655; FO 371/2140/46261.

⁷⁵Mallet to Grey, 3 Sept., 1914, No. 683; FO 371/2138/38623.

⁷⁶Buchanan to Grey, 25 Sept., 1914, No. 456, Very Confidential; FO 371/2143/53082.

⁷⁷Grey to Buchanan, 29 Oct., 1914, No. 938; FO 371/2145/64913. That Britain, Russia and France were pursuing a common foreign policy was made clear to Turkey. Grey's No. 705 (24 Oct.; FO 371/2139/38623) instructed Mallet to inform the Turkish Government that "a military violation of frontier of Egypt will place them in a state of war with three allied Powers." Mallet replied on 27 October (No. 1073: ibid.), "I clearly indicated to the Grand Vizier yesterday that if Turkey attacked one of the Entente Powers, it would involve her war with the others, but I am sure that his Highness fully realises this."

⁷⁸Grey to Mallet, 30 Oct., 1914, No. 725; FO 371/2145/64913. According to Bertie's No. 437 of 30 October (ibid.), the French Ambassador was also instructed to conform his action with regard to withdrawal to that of his Russian colleague.

⁷⁹Mallet to Grey, 30 Oct., 1914, No. 1090; ibid. According to a minute by Clerk on the 30th, a telegram was sent to Mallet that he should give a Note to the Turkish Government, asking for a reply within 12 hours. But because the Turkish Government cut communications, he did not receive it. (Ibid.)

⁸⁰Minute by Grey on Mallet to Grey, 31 Oct., 1914, No. 1100; FO 371/2145/64913: "We have already taken action at Akaba and presumable Fao, though I have not heard what has happened at Fao." This minute is undated; the preceding minute by Nicolson is dated 2 November.

⁸¹Buchanan to Grey, 29 Oct., 1914, No. 571; ibid.

⁸²Buchanan to Grey, 3 Nov., 1914, No. 596; ibid.

⁸³War Office, "Allied Commitments".

⁸⁴Gottlieb, p. 71. About 12 November, in a letter to Grey discussing the arguments which would be used in Egypt to support British annexation, Kitchener matter-of-factly referred to the Turkish Empire as "doomed". It should be pointed out to the Egyptians, he stated, that as the Turkish Empire was doomed, the question arises as to what nationality the Turks would have in future. "Some will become Russian subjects some Greek probably some Bulgars but the Turks in Egypt will have the opportunity of becoming British subjects and joining the vast number of Moslems of India of the same nationality. . . ." Kitchener to Grey, enclosure with Nicolson to Grey, 12 Nov., 1914; FO 371/1984/70205.

⁸⁵British and Foreign State Papers, 1915, p. 368. On 6 October, 1914, G.R. Clerk minuted, "It would probably be undesirable to proclaim, at the outset of war with Turkey, that Cyprus was Turkey territory in enemy occupation, and I think it would be simpler to prepare to announce a protectorate, or preferably annexation, as there is no native ruler for us to protect." Nicolson and Grey agreed, and on 16 October Eyre Crowe wrote to the Colonial Office that a Royal Proclamation proclaiming British annexation of Cyprus should be prepared for immediate issue if the occasion arises. Minutes by Clerk, Nicolson and Grey on Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 5 Oct., 1914; Eyre Crowe to Undersecretary of State, Colonial Office, 16 Oct., 1914; FO 371/2143/56311. In January, 1915, Grey was in favour of giving Cyprus to Greece as part of a Balkan agreement. "I also want the French and Russians to feel," he wrote, "that we are prepared to play for the common cause and not solely for our own hand in the East." Grey to Kitchener, 19 Jan., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/77.

⁸⁶Crewe to Hardinge, 9 Dec., 1914; FO 371/2144/61439. British and Foreign State Papers, 1915, p. 210. It is noteworthy as an indication of the British attitude towards these moves in Cyprus & Egypt, that the C.I.D. committee on territorial changes, when considering the question of territorial adjustments amongst the Allies in a general settlement at the end of the war, was uncertain "whether Egypt and Cyprus are to be reckoned as British acquisitions made during the war or as previously existing British possessions whose value has been somewhat enhanced during the war by the abrogation of certain limitations upon our authority." C.I.D., "Third Interim Report; CO 537/993.

⁸⁷Arnold Wilson to his parents, April, 1915; Marlowe, p. 99

⁸⁸Viceroy to Secretary of State, 4 Sept., 1914; FO 371/2143/54139.

⁸⁹Viceroy to Secretary of State, 2 Jan., 1915; Cab. 37/123/6.

⁹⁰Viceroy to Secretary of State, 4 Sept., 1914; FO 371/2143/54139. D. Howarth, The Desert King (New York; McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 50-96. The Sherif Husein, on the other hand, had been "a mere minion of the Turks." Ibid., p. 106

⁹¹Marlowe, p.71.

⁹²Kitchener minute on Cheetham to Grey, 24 Aug., 1914, No. 143; FO 371/2140/46261.

⁹³Grey to Cheetham, 14 Nov., 1914; FO 371/2140/46261.

⁹⁴Viceroy to Secretary of State, 4 Sept., 1914; FO 371/2143/54139. On British policy in Mesopotamia, see also V.H. Rothwell, "Mesopotamia in British War Aims, 1914-1918", Historical Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (1970), pp. 273-294.

⁹⁵W. Graham Greene (Admiralty) to Undersecretary of State, Foreign Office, 9 Sept., 1914; FO 371/2139/44923.

⁹⁶Minutes by Crowe, 29 Sept., 1914, and Grey (n.d.) on India Office to Foreign Office; FO 371/2139/44923.

⁹⁷Eyre Crowe, "The Arabs and Turkey", Memorandum on an interview with Admiral Slade and General Barrow, 26 Sept., 1914; ibid. Grey showed his usual preoccupation by minuting on this memorandum, "We shall have to inform in due time French and Russian Governments."

⁹⁸Viceroy to the Secretary of State, 20 Nov., 1914; Cab. 37/122/169

⁹⁹Minute by Military Secretary, India Office, "Persian Gulf Operations", 27 Nov., 1914; FO 371/2143/54139.

¹⁰⁰Secretary of State to Viceroy, 16 Nov., 1914; FO 371/2144/61439.

¹⁰¹Secretary of State to Viceroy, 27 Nov., 1914; FO 371/2144/61439.

¹⁰²F.J. Moberley, History of the Great War: The Campaign in Mesopotamia, Vol. I (London, H.M.S.O., 1923), p. 194. The protection of the oil fields and installations appears as a subsidiary aim in these instructions: "So far as you may find feasible without prejudicing your main operations you should endeavour to secure the safety of the oil-fields, pipe-lines and refineries of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company."

¹⁰³Hardinge to Nicolson, 23 Sept, 1915; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/379. Moberley, Vol. I, p. 312. "Your mission" Townshend was told, "is the destruction and dispersal of the enemy. . . . and the occupation of Kut al Amara, thereby consolidating our control of the Basra vilayet."

¹⁰⁴Hardinge to Nicolson, 23 Sept., 1915; Nicolson Papers ibid. In June, 1915, Arnold Wilson wrote from Basra that the question of an advance to Baghdad was being much discussed there. His own feeling was that if the British did take Baghdad, "the moral effect would be very great and the strain on Persia would be relieved." Marlowe, p. 92. In October, 1915, a War Office memorandum pointed out that an advance on Baghdad with the troops then available was not practical, partly because "the mere capture of Baghdad will not in itself close the road to Persia, and it would, therefore, be necessary to send out columns from the vicinity of the city if one of the objects for which the expedition had been undertaken is to be secured." War Office, "The Question of Occupying Baghdad", 14 Oct., 1915; WO 106/310. In a memorandum of 26 October, 1916, Robertson expressed the hope that General Maude would be able "to give material assistance in checkmating the German-Turkish propaganda in South-West Persia." Robertson, "A General Review of the Situation in all Theatres of war. . . .", 26 Oct., 1916; WO 106/310.

¹⁰⁵Hardinge to Nicolson, 2 Mar., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. The problem of controlling "the roving bands of Germans and Austrians in Central Persia" was made more difficult, Hardinge pointed out, by the lack of co-operation and energy shown by the Tehran Government. It seemed "quite impossible to get that miserable Government to run straight." But Hardinge was sanguine that if the Russians succeeded in getting to Kermanshah, "the Germans and Austrians should find their communications entirely cut off with Turkey and Europe."

¹⁰⁶Hardinge to Nicolson, 11 Jan. 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. Robertson, "General Review."

¹⁰⁷War Office, "Note on our Future Military Policy in the Event of the Failure of the Entente Powers to obtain a Decision in the Main Theatres during the Coming Summer", Jan., 1917; WO 106/1511.

¹⁰⁸Grey minute on India Office to Foreign Office, 5 Dec., 1914; FO 371/2144/61439.

¹⁰⁹Secretary of State to Viceroy, 9 Dec., 1914; ibid.

¹¹⁰Viceroy to Secretary of State, 19 Dec., 1914; ibid.

¹¹¹Selby (Foreign Office) to Lucas (India Office), 25 Dec., 1914; ibid.

¹¹²Marlowe, p. 99. Marlowe also quotes Hubert Young, another Government of India official, who went to Basra as a Political Officer in the autumn of 1915. "In those early days," Young subsequently wrote, "I naturally assumed, with everyone else out there, that Mesopotamia would be annexed to the British Empire." Ibid., p. 94.

¹¹³Hardinge to Nicolson, 19 Aug., 1915; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/379.

¹¹⁴Storrs to Fitzgerald, 27 Jan., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/47: "It is a great mercy that we have satisfactorily delimited the Egyptian and Indian spheres of Arab influence." On 11 December, long after action had been taken from Cairo, the Viceroy suggested an approach be made to the Sherif of Mecca, through the Resident at Aden. (Viceroy to Secretary of State, 11 Dec., 1914; FO 371/2139/44923.) In Mesopotamia India opposed the attempts of Cairo to work with Aziz Bey el

Masri and General Cherif Pasha. India Office to Foreign Office, 11 Dec., 1914; FO 371/2140/46261. On 12 December Lancelot Oliphant of the Foreign Office wrote a minute on this, in which he expressed his wish "that Bin Saoud had not become distrustful of us on the score of the Hakki negotiations." Grey telegraphed to Cheetham in Cairo on 18 December (No. 432; FO 371/2140/46261) that in the opinion of the Government of India it was advisable, as a matter of principle not to encourage outside factors in the Mesopotamian situation, which depends largely on the attitude of Bin Saud. . . ."

¹¹⁵ Grey to Cheetham, 31 Oct., 1914, No. 303; FO 371/2139/44923. See also Kedourie, p.52.

¹¹⁶ Cheetham to Grey, 10 Dec., 1914, No. 310,; ibid.

¹¹⁷ McMahon to Grey, 22 Aug., 1915, No. 450, FO 371/2486/34982.

¹¹⁸ Grey told the French Ambassador in October, for instance, that the British Government wished to consult the French Government "before entering into any definite engagements as to boundaries of an independent Arab State if such came into being on the side of Syria." Grey to Bertie, 30 Oct. 1915, No. 2464; FO 371/2486/34982. Grey's idea was to yield almost completely to the demands of the Sherif. "Our primary and vital object," he stated on 6 Nov., 1915, "is not to secure a new sphere of British influence, but to get Arabs on our side against Turks." Grey to McMahon 16 Nov., 1915, No. 860; ibid. On 10 November he told the French Ambassador that despite the opposition of India the British Government were willing to promise the inclusion of Basra and Baghdad in the Arab State in order to secure a separation between the Arabs and the Turks, and he hoped the French would take the same attitude in Syria, Cambon objected, however, that while Basra and Baghdad would in any case remain under British influence, this would not be so of Syria, and France "really regarded Syria as a dependency." Grey to Bertie, 10 Nov., 1915, No. 878; ibid. On Grey's position between Arab aspirations and French interests see Kedourie, pp. 35-38. On the negotiations in general and the role played by Cairo and Khartoum, see Kedourie's article "Cairo and Khartoum on the Arab Question, 1915-1918", in The Historical Journal, Vol. VII, No. 2 (1964), pp. 280-297.

¹¹⁹McMahon to Grey, 26 Oct., 1915, No. 644; FO 371/2139/44923.

¹²⁰McMahon to Grey, 14 Nov., 1915; ibid. The message of 5 November from the Sherif stated that if their frontier aspirations were granted and Britain bound herself not to abandon the Arabs, they would "come in at once." See also War office, "Allied Commitments."

¹²¹McMahon to Bertie, 28 Nov., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/47.

¹²²General Staff, "Note on Proposed Operations on the Eastern Frontier of Egypt" (undated, about December, 1916); WO 106/310. See also Robertson's "General Review" of 26 Oct., 1916; WO 106/310. The memorandum points out that "the policy of passive defence of the Canal is both extravagant in men and encouraging to the enemy." The advance of the railway to the Katia Oasis would enable Murray "completely to bar the easiest line of approach to the Canal and to establish at Katia a base from which a further advance can be made, which it is hoped will give encouragement to the Sherif and to all the various elements in Syria which are discontented with Turkish rule." Sachar, p. 86, erroneously explains the British political action amongst the Arabs as a consequence of their military failures, when in fact all of the evidence indicates the military activity in the Middle East was initially motivated largely by political considerations.

¹²³G.O.C.-in-C., E.E.F. (A.J. Murray) to C.I.G.S., 13 Dec., 1916; WO 106/310.

¹²⁴W.R. Robertson, "Note on a proposal to Undertake a Campaign in Palestine during the Winter with the Object of Capturing Jerusalem:", 29 Dec., 1916; WO 106/310.

¹²⁵Director of Military Operations to Undersecretary of State, Foreign Office, 9 Nov., 1916; WO 158/626.

¹²⁶Storrs to Fitzgerald, 28 Dec., 1914; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/45.

¹²⁷McMahon to Kitchener, 4 Feb., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/47.

¹²⁸Storrs to Fitzgerald, 8 Mar., 1915; ibid. Grey's telegram is mentioned in a postscript to this letter. The quotation is Storr's paraphrase of Grey's message. See also Fisher to Kitchener, 11 March, 1915; PRO 30/57/80. "The Politicians (both sides: (Balfour the worst!) want to pander to the French!" Fisher complained. He and Kitchener agreed that the French should be properly approached and shown what the British had done for them.

¹²⁹Kitchener, "The Dardanelles", 28 May, 1915; Creedy (Kitchener) Papers, WO 159/3. See also Grey to Buchanan, 11 Mar., 1915: FO 371/2449/25014. "One of the great objects in undertaking the operations in the Dardanelles was to bring the Balkan States over to our side."

¹³⁰Kitchener to Maxwell, 24 Feb., 1915, No. 3261 cipher; WO 33/731/110A.

¹³¹Russian circular telegram, 4 Mar., 1915; War Office "Allied Commitments." On the negotiations in November and December, 1914, see Gottlieb, pp. 66-76. For a more recent study of the Straits question see William A. Renzi, "Great Britain, Russia, and the Straits, 1914-1915", Journal of Modern History, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Mar., 1970), pp. 1-20.

¹³²Harcourt, "The Spoils".

¹³³1st Earl of Oxford and Asquith, Memories and Reflections, Vol. II, (London: Cassell, 1928), p. 65.

¹³⁴Bertie to Grey, 7 Mar., 1915, Personal and Secret; FO 371/2449/25014.

¹³⁵Bertie to Grey, 10 Mar., 1915, No. 87; ibid.

¹³⁶Bertie to Grey, 11 Mar., 1915, Private and Secret; ibid.

¹³⁷Buchanan, Aide-mémoire communicated to the Russian Government, 12 Mar., 1915; War Office, "Allied Commitments." C.J. Lowe, "Britain and Italian Intervention, 1914-1915", Historical Journal, Vol. XII, No. 3 (1969), pp. 541-543.

¹³⁸Grey to Buchanan, 11 Mar., 1915, No. 43 Private and Secret; FO 371/2449/25014.

¹³⁹The report of this committee outlined British economic and strategic interests in the Ottoman Empire; it recommended, however, that zones of interest were preferable to a partition of the Turkish Empire: Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, 30 July, 1915, Cab. 42/3/12. See also Nevakivi, pp. 18-24

¹⁴⁰Buchanan, Aide-memoire, 12 Mar., 1915; War Office, "Allied Commitments".

¹⁴¹Grey to Buchanan, 11 Mar., 1915 No. 43 Private and Secret; FO 371/2449/25014.

¹⁴²Buchanan to Grey, 13 Mar., 1915, No. 54 Private and Secret; ibid. For another example of the optimistic or progressive point of view as regards future relations with Russia, see J.D. Gregory to Drummond, 11 May, 1915; FO 371/155. Writing from Rome, where there was concern about the menace of Russia after the war, Gregory stated that one of his stock arguments there was " that it is inconceivable that after close co-operation and friendship with the two great free nations of the modern world in overthrowing the worst despotism that has ever been she will fail to be affected by the contagion of their Liberalism or the realisation of the principle for which the war has been fought and won."

¹⁴³Grey to Buchanan, 11 Mar., 1915, No. 43 Private and Secret; ibid.

¹⁴⁴Grey to Buchanan, 19 Mar., 1915; No. 380; ibid.

¹⁴⁵Grey to Buchanan, 22 Mar., 1915 No. 401 Private and Secret; ibid.

¹⁴⁶Grey to Bertie, 23 Mar., 1915; Grey, Vol. II p.230.

¹⁴⁷Mark Sykes, "The Problem of the Near East", 20 June, 1916; WO 106/1510. For a discussion of the Anglo-French negotiations leading to the Sykes-Picot agreement, and an assessment of the agreement, see Nevakivi, pp. 30-44.

¹⁴⁸Nicolson to Hardinge, 16 Feb., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. "We have obtained from the French a full statement of their desiderata," Nicolson wrote, "and are now going to discuss matters with Russia. This will take some little time and then we shall really have to come to some decision as to what further conversations we are to have with the Grand Shereef."

¹⁴⁹Notes exchanged by Lord Grey and M. Cambon, May 9-16, 1916; War Office, "Allied Commitments".

¹⁵⁰War Office, "Note on the Anglo-Franco-Russian Agreement about the Near East," 10 July, 1917; WO 106/719.

¹⁵¹Notes exchanged by M. Paléologue and M. Sazonov, on April 26, 1916; War Office, "Allied Commitments."

¹⁵²Notes exchanged by Lord Grey and M. Cambon, May 9-16, 1916; ibid.

¹⁵³Notes exchanged by Lord Grey and Count Benckendorff, May 23/Sept. 1, 1916; ibid.

¹⁵⁴Notes exchanged by Lord Grey and M. Cambon, May 9-16, 1916; ibid.

¹⁵⁵Grey, Vol. II, p. 231.

¹⁵⁶Mark Sykes, "The Problem of the Near East."

¹⁵⁷D.M.I. (George MacDonogh) to C.I.G.S., 1 Aug., 1917; WO 106/1514.

¹⁵⁸Hardinge to MacDonogh, 8 Nov., 1917; WO 106/1516. "We are watching all the time," Hardinge wrote, "for an opportunity to detach Turkey without paying too much attention to the Asia Minor agreements which we could insist on being modified if a real prospect of detaching Turkey presented itself."

¹⁵⁹Grey, Vol. II, pp. 160, 161.

¹⁶⁰"The Problem of the Near East." See also Nevakivi, pp. 23-24

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

¹Hendrick, Vol I, p. 380.

²Lord Tennyson, "Locksley Hall".

³A.S. Link, Wilson: The Struggle for Neutrality (Princeton: University Press, 1960). p. 12. In November, 1915, however, Senator Root would point out to Spring Rice that there was in the United States "a growing sense that the victory of the Central Powers would be an immense calamity to this country," Spring Rice to Grey, 21 Nov., 1915; Gwynn, The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice (London: Constable, 1929), p. 298.

⁴Arthur Willert, Road to Safety (London: Verschoyle, 1952), p. 36.

⁵Ibid., pp. 41,42. Note also Roosevelt to Grey, 3 Oct., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 139: "the bulk of our people do not understand foreign politics and have no idea about any impending military danger."

⁶Millis, p.58.

⁷Charles Seymour, The Intimate Papers of Colonel House (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), Vol II, p. 19. See also ibid., p. 83.

⁸A.S. Link, Wilson the Diplomatist (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1957), pp. 9-18, for a description of Wilson's attitude towards foreign policy and the role of his religious and ethical beliefs as a factor in his policy.

⁹Willert, P.33 Spring Rice gave Willert a note on the conversation in which the President made this statement.

¹⁰Spring Rice to Grey, 3 Sept., 1914; Trevelyan, p. 313.

¹¹House to Page, 4 Dec., 1914; Hendrick, Vol.I, pp. 416-417.

¹²Willert, P. 33.

¹³E.R. May, The World War and American Isolation (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1966 (c. 1959))p. 77. Spring Rice had given the advantageous military position of Germany as a reason for not entering into peace discussions.

¹⁴A.M. Morrissey, The American Defense of Neutral Rights, 1914-1917 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939), pp. 5-48 J.A.S. Grenville, "Diplomacy and War Plans in the United States, 1890-1917". Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, II (1961), pp. 1-21. Until February of 1917 no thought at all was given to the idea of co-operating with the allies on land and sea and no plan existed for sending an expeditionary force to Europe. In this regard note also Spring-Rice to Grey, 17 Mar., 1916; Gwynn, p.327, "The American army is inadequate. Congress has taken absolutely no steps to make proper preparations."

¹⁵Trevelyan, p. 309.

¹⁶See Link, Wilson the Diplomatist, pp. 40-43.

¹⁷May, p. 347.

¹⁸Foreign Relations of the United States, 1914 Supplement, p. 42. The message from President Wilson declared, " . . . I should welcome an opportunity to act in the interests of European peace, either now or at any other time that may be thought more suitable." An identical message was sent to Russia and Germany on 4 August and to France and Britain on 5 August.

¹⁹Grey to Barclay, 7 Aug., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 157,158. See also Page to Bryan, 7 Aug., 1914, No. 298; Foreign Relations, 1914 Supplement, p. 50, in which Page reports on this conversation. "If it prove a long-drawn equal struggle," Grey stated, "a chance (for mediation) may come when this fact becomes apparent."

²⁰Bryan to Page, 8 Sept., 1914: Foreign Relations, 1914 Supp., p. 99.

²¹Hendrick, Vol I, P. 407.

²²Grey to Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 115-116

²³Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 411. See also Spring Rice to Grey, 17 Sept., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, p. 116. On German policy see Fischer, pp. 118,280,283.

²⁴For unfavourable comments by House on Bryan's policy see Intimate Papers, Vol. II, p. 86.

²⁵May, p. 75.

²⁶Spring Rice to Grey, 27 Nov., 1914, No. 393; Cab 37/122/190.

²⁷Page to House, 22 Oct., 1914; Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 384.

²⁸Grey to Spring Rice, 9 Sept., 1914.

²⁹House to Page, 4 Dec., 1914; Hendrick, Vol. I, pp. 416,417. House had indicated in a letter to Page on 3 Oct., 1914, that by "a cessation of militarism" he meant an arrangement for disarmament. "The attitude, I think, for England to maintain is the one which she so ably put forth to the world. That is, peace must come only upon conditions of disarmament and must be permanent." He did not agree that Germany had to be completely crushed. Ibid., p. 413

³⁰Page to House, 12 Dec., 1914; ibid., pp. 417-418.

³¹Grey to Roosevelt, 18 Dec., 1914; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 142,143. See also Grey to Roosevelt, 20 Oct., 1914; ibid., pp. 140,141: " . . . I can see nothing for it but to fight on till we can get a peace that will secure us against Prussian militarism."

³²Asquith diary, 25 Dec., 1914; Memories and Reflections, p. 50.

³³May, p. 77.

³⁴House to Page, 18 Jan., 1915; Hendrick, Vol. I, pp. 354-355.

³⁵House to Page, 4 Jan., 1915; Hendrick, Vol. I, pp. 424,425. An indication of the French attitude on the prospects of peace at this time is found in A. Hardinge (Madrid) to Grey, 15 Jan., 1915; CO 537/601. The French Ambassador in Madrid told the Spanish King that the

moment was "not very opportune for discussing eventual rearrangements of the map . . . so long before there was any real prospect of peace."

³⁶Hendrick, Vol I, p. 425.

³⁷Grey to Spring Rice, 22 Jan., 1915; Grey Papers, FO 800/85. See also Grey to Spring Rice, 22 Dec., 1914; Trevelyan, p. 314. According to Sir John French, the . . . possession of the strip of Belgian coast-line was "one of the main causes of the prolongation of the war." 1914, p. 308. French's views, however, were apparently not entirely in line with the general policy of the Liberal Government. He did not believe in the policy of "crushing out militarism", for instance: England must just arm herself against Germany as well as she could. Page, Memorandum on conversation with French, 15 Jan., 1915; Hendrick, Vol I, pp. 427-429. The apparent soft attitude of General Headquarters towards Germany was the object of criticism by Lord Salisbury in a letter of 6 December, 1914 to Robert Cecil, who had just visited the front. "As to the long letter," Salisbury wrote, " . . . the thing which outstands in my mind is that the Hd. Quarters want to treat Germany generously." Cecil Papers, B.M. Add. Mss.

³⁸Grey to Spring Rice, 12 Feb., 1915; FO 800/85. On 2 January, 1915, Grey told Spring Rice, "I cannot help feeling doubtful in absence of any confirmation from Berlin whether Germany is really prepared to concede restoration of Belgium. Grey to Spring Rice, 2 Jan., 1915; Trevelyan, p. 315. On 19 January to the Secretary of State Page reported that the talk about possible peace was "very guarded and hesitating." "Sir Edward Grey . . . left the impression on my mind that until something definite came direct from Berlin there could be nothing worth discussing." Foreign Relations, 1915 Supp., p. 6.

³⁹Bertie to Grey, 7 Mar., 1915, Personal and Secret; FO 371/2449/25014. Bertie to Grey, 9 Mar., 1915, No. 861: Note communicated by Count Benckendorff, 9 Mar., 1915; Grey, Minute on conversation with Count Benckendorff, 9 Mar., 1915; FO 371/2450/25971.

⁴⁰Grey to House, 22 Sept., 1915; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 87-89.

⁴¹Grey to House, 10 Aug., 1915; ibid., pp. 87, 88

⁴²Grey to House, 26 Aug., 1915; ibid., p. 88.

⁴³E. Drummond, Memorandum on conversation with Mr. Howard Taylor, 6 Sept., 1915; FO 800/85. The neutral, referred to in the conversation with Mr. Taylor but not named, is presumably the Danish businessman, H.N. Andersen, who in August, 1915, had conversations with Grey, Kitchener and the King, and on 2 September reported to Bethmann - Hollweg on these talks and on his general impression of the situation in England. The British government he reported, felt there was no basis for peace at that time, though Andersen was invited to return soon, as it was thought good to maintain connection. Andersen told Bethmann that slight doubts about whether the war would go favourably for England were beginning to appear there. Bethmann-Hollweg to the Copenhagen Legation, 2 Sept., 1915; A. Scherer and J. Grunewald (ed.) L'Allemagne et les problèmes de la paix (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), pp. 166-167. See also Grey to Mrs. Creighton, 9 Sept., 1915; Trevelyan, p. 317: "Sometime the war must end, but the end does not seem to come nearer, and I want a good peace."

⁴⁴Nicolson to Hardinge, 1 Sept., 1915; FO 800/381.

⁴⁵Nicolson to Hardinge, 15 Sept., 1915; ibid. As regards the attitude in Germany towards peace terms and the British view of that attitude, see Cecil, Note on conversation with three Dutchmen, circulated to the Cabinet by Grey on 19 July, 1915; FO 371/2367/98425. The three Dutchmen described two schools of thought on war aims in Germany, "annexationists" and "anti-annexationists". The lines of peace suggested by the former were transfer to Germany of the French and Belgian Congo, the creation of a general European fund for the restoration of devastated land, as a substitute for an indemnity to Germany, and in other respects a reversion to the status quo. The annexationist party -- which included all National Liberals and nearly all Conservatives, the Centre being divided -- proposed to annex all of Belgium and "a good deal of France and Eastern Poland" and to demand an immense indemnity. Cecil tried to impress upon them that it was certain the annexationists would carry their way. He also pointed out that "in this country they would do well not to pay much attention to what was said by isolated politicians -- I did not mention Arthur Ponsonby by name -- since the whole power is with the organised parties."

⁴⁶ Intimate Papers, Vol. II, p. 90. See also May, pp. 348-352, for the origins of House's 1916 peace bid. May states that House's letter to Wilson on 14 July, 1915, (ibid., p. 19) contained "the glimmering of an idea": if the United States had prepared actively when war broke out, they would be "in a position almost to enforce peace." The idea -- that the effectiveness of a State in diplomacy was related to its actual power -- was a platitude to European statesmen, and it was the basis of the British policy of avoiding committing themselves to a conference without an indication that Germany by agreeing to Allied terms, such as an indemnity, was willing to admit the general superiority of the allies.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 89,91.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 91,98.

⁴⁹ House gave a false explanation of the trip to Spring Rice in order to avoid offending him. He informed the British Ambassador that he was going to London and Paris and perhaps Rome to convey personal messages from the President to the Ambassadors, and he assured him that he "had no mission of any description and conveyed no proposals and would not even make a suggestion of a political character." Spring Rice to Grey, 23 Dec., 1915; Gwynn, pp. 304,305. On 6 December, when Spring Rice had sent a message to House, through Sir Paul Harvey, again expressing opposition to any peace move by the United States, House had by his own account "listened to it with scant courtesy." Ibid., p. 308.

⁵⁰ House diary, 6 Jan., 1916; House to Wilson, 7 Jan., 1916; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 116-118.

⁵¹ House diary, 10 Jan., House to Wilson, 11 Jan., 1916; ibid., pp. 119-123.

⁵² House diary, 15 Jan., 1916; ibid., pp. 129-131

⁵³ House diary, 19 Jan., 1916; ibid., p. 127.

⁵⁴ House diary, 28 Jan., 1916; ibid., p. 141-142.

⁵⁵ Jules Cambon, Conversation avec M. House, 2 Feb., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. House diary, 2 Feb., 1916; House to Wilson 9 Feb., 1916; Intimate papers, Vol. II, pp. 157,158,163-165.

⁵⁶House to Wilson, 10 Feb., 1916; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 171-172.

⁵⁷House, Notes on conversation with Asquith, Grey and Balfour, 11 Feb., 1916; ibid., pp. 174-176. Hankey, Vol. II, p. 479. Hankey found Balfour "a bit depressed" by House's account of German strength. Hankey told him "that the Germans have probably deliberately stuffed the U.S. naval and military attaches with exaggerated accounts of their strength in order to create an impression on House, and through him on us." See also Riddell, pp. 154-155. When House dined with Lloyd George on the 11th, he told him that the Germans were confident of victory and pointed with pride to the conquest of larger area than the whole of the German Empire. Lloyd George remarked afterwards to Riddell that he "had not appreciated the extent of the territory now subject to the German Armies."

⁵⁸House, Notes on conversation of 14 Feb., 1916; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 179-182. The involvement of Page would have given more of an official nature to the House negotiations, as House had no constitutional status whatever, and even if the eventual "understanding" had been signed by House and Grey and had not included the word "probably", it could not have been looked upon as a treaty. Page was in fact invited by House to attend the meeting on 12 February: "House told me that we'd have a meeting on Monday" the Ambassador wrote on the 11th, " . . . Asquith, Grey, Reading, Lloyd George, he and I. No, we won't. No member of the Government can afford to discuss any such subject; not one of them has any confidence in the strength of the President for action." Ibid., Vol. II, p. 178. A month later Wilson wrote to House of his idea of bringing Page back for a vacation, "to get some American atmosphere into him again." Ibid., Vol. II, p. 219.

⁵⁹House diary, 15 Feb., 1916; ibid., Vol. II pp. 182-183. "Sir Edward was visibly pleased with the result of our meeting last night. He congratulated me upon committing Lloyd George so thoroughly to the proposition of intervention by the President."

⁶⁰House diary, 17 Feb., 1916; ibid., pp. 194-195

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 201, 202.

⁶²Ibid., p. 202.

⁶³"Addendum to the Proceeding of the War Committee," 21 Mar., 1916; Cab 42/11/6.

⁶⁴Spring Rice to Grey, 12 Feb., 1916; Gwynn, p. 313.

⁶⁵"Addendum", 21 Mar., 1916. See also Hankey, Vol. II, pp. 479-480. Hankey recorded in his diary on 16 March, "The Prime Minister himself affects to regard the whole thing as humbug, and a mere manoeuvre of American politics."

⁶⁶"Addendum", 21 Mar., 1916. Intimate Papers, Vol. II, p. 168. Churchill, Vol. III, p. 18. On 17 February Lord Reading told House that a great work had been accomplished on the 14th by getting Lloyd George, Balfour and Asquith all committed to House's general proposition in the presence of each other. "This," House recorded, "is because Reading knows, as I know and they know, that peace discussions at this time would be about as popular in England as the coronation of the Kaiser in Westminster Abbey." Intimate Papers, Vol. II, P. 184.

⁶⁷House diary, 15 Feb., 1916; ibid., pp. 182, 183.

⁶⁸"Addendum", 21 Mar., 1916.

⁶⁹Grey, Vol. II, p. 128.

⁷⁰"If -- it is still a big if -- it only happen that Germans fail at Verdum, they may really begin to want peace and give up present hope of domination." Grey to Spring Rice, 24 Mar., 1916; Gwynn, p. 318.

⁷¹"Addendum", 21 Mar., 1916. On Grey's attitude see also Hankey, Vol. II, p. 480. Grey discussed House's proposal with Hankey on the 16th. "He spoke of the heavy responsibility which this laid on him. If he took no notice of it, and the war went wrong, he would have missed a great opportunity either to get a decent peace or to bring in America."

⁷²Hankey, Vol. II, p. 479.

⁷³"Addendum", 21 Mar., 1916. Hankey, Vol. II, p. 480..

⁷⁴Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 273, 274..

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 275-276.

⁷⁶Grey to House, 7 Apr., 1916; ibid., pp. 275-276

⁷⁷Examples of this approach are found in Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 173, 180. He wished, he wrote after the meeting of 14 February, "to make them feel less hopeful and to show the, as I have often tried to do, what a terrible gamble they are taking in not invoking our intervention."

⁷⁸Intimate Papers, Vol. II. pp. 175, 184.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 278, 279.

⁸⁰Intimate Papers, pp. 282, 283. Grey's continuing belief in the need for Victory also appears in Grey to Buchanan, 15 May, 1916, No. 112; Cab 37/147/40. In conversation with a member of the Russian Government Grey stated, "Prussian militarism would cease to dominate Germany if the German people were convinced the war had been a mistake." On specific terms, he said the British put the full restoration of Belgium in the first rank. He presumed the first objects for France and Russia were, respectively, Alsace-Lorraine and Constantinople and the Straits.

⁸¹Intimate Papers, pp. 286-288. On 29 May, Spring Rice commented on American policy, "Considerations based upon the condition of Europe, should a peace be now made, are not of such weight as to counter-balance the strong desire to see the end of the war which is now prevalent in this country." Spring Rice to Grey, 29 May, 1916; Cab 37/148/37

⁸²Intimate Papers, p. 289. In a memorandum of 25 May Sir Maurice Hankey commented, "The United States as likely as not will be on the eve of a Presidential Election and unwilling to take a hand. In any case, such a democratic country cannot be relied on to take any part in European affairs. They are so cosmopolitan and so wedded to the almighty dollar that they cannot be judged even by the comparatively low standard of other nations in regard to matters of national honour." Hankey to Balfour, 25 May, 1916; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49704.

⁸³Grey to Granville, 12 Apr., 1916, No. 276; FO 371/2685/15037. See also Sir E. Howard (Stockholm) to Sir Edward Grey, 8 April, 1916; Cab 37/146/8. Howard reported on a conversation between the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs and the French Minister in Stockholm, in which the latter stated that the French Government "was not likely to agree to anything which gave France no compensation for the tremendous sacrifice she had undergone." On Russian policy, see H. O'Bierne's minute of 24 March on a conversation between the British Military attaché and the Russian Emperor, who "had . . . shown himself absolutely determined to carry on the war to a victorious end." (FO 371/57508).

⁸⁴Bertie to Grey, 16 May, 1916, No. 194; FO 371/2676/94596.

⁸⁵Gwynn, p. 333. May, p. 358.

⁸⁶House to Grey, 8 June, 1916; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 290-292. Balfour to Sanderson, 4 Jan., 1917; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49739.

⁸⁷D.A. Hamer, John Morley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p. 367. If Britain goes to war, Morley had warned Asquith, "we are only playing Russia's game." House's concern about Germany's role in the balance of power were apparently shared by some Englishmen. "Many of those who speculate about the future of Europe," Balfour wrote in October, 1916, "seem to fear that the balance of power will be utterly upset and Britain will be left face to face with some other great power striving in its turn for universal dominance." Balfour, "The Peace Settlement in Europe", 4 Oct., 1916; Cab 37/157/7.

⁸⁸House of Commons Debates, Vol. 80, Col. 737. See also Guinn, p. 122. When H.N. Andersen reported to Brockdorff-Rantzau, the German Minister in Copenhagen, that in his interviews with the King and Sir Edward Grey on 29 February, he had been given little encouragement as regards the possibility of peace, the Minister replied that he did not expect much after Asquith's unworthy speech. (" . . . nach der unwürdigen Rede Asquith's habe ich nichts anderes erwartet . . ."). Brockdorff-Rantzau to Bethmann-Hollweg, 1 March, 1916; L'Allemagne et les problèmes de la paix. pp. 282-284.

⁸⁹Riddell, p. 187. Questioned in the Commons on 21 March on the Government's attitude towards the idea of a conference to discuss peace, Lloyd George answered only that the questioner should refer to Asquith's policy statement. of 23 February. House of Commons Debates, Vol. 81, col. 27.

⁹⁰Quoted in ibid., Vol. 82, col. 2185. The initial answer to the German chancellor was given by Asquith at a dinner for members of the French Parliament on 10 April. See Guinn, p. 122 and House of Commons Debates, Vol. 81, col. 1778.

⁹¹Quoted in ibid., cols. 2185-2186.

⁹²Robert Blake (ed.), The Private Papers of Douglas Haig, 1914-1919 (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 138.

⁹³Page to House, 25 May, 1916; Hendrick, pp. 157-159. House of Commons Debates, Vol. 82, col. 2201.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

¹War Office, "Note on our Future Military Policy in the Event of the Failure of the Entente Powers to Obtain a Decision in the Main Theatres during the Coming Summer", January, 1917; WO 106/1511.

²"Conditions of an Armistice", 17 Sept., 1916; Cab 42/20/2. Crawford was Minister of Agriculture at this time.

³Nicolson to Hardinge, 16 Feb., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381. On 6 Sept., 1915, Balfour had written to Fisher, "I await the development of your new type of submarine with the greatest possible interest; but at the moment I would give up all the new submarines in the world if the Inventions Board could discover a method of destroying the old ones." Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49712. The letter pointed to a basic change in the general British position caused by the advent of the submarine. British superiority in number and technology of submarines would not be equivalent to superiority in surface vessels, Balfour explained, for Germany could still blockade Britain quite effectively even with a submarine fleet inferior in number and quality; and blockade would be much more perilous to Britain than it would be to Germany.

⁴On the Cabinet crisis of December, 1915, see Trevelyan pp. 326-327; Paul Guinn, British Strategy and Politics 1914-1918 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 126.

⁵W.R. Robertson, "Addendum to the General Staff Memorandum of 31 August, 1916", 28 Mar., 1917; WO 106/1511.

⁶Sir Maurice Hankey, Memorandum on Strategy, 28 Dec., 1914; WO 159/2.

⁷War Office, Notes on Home Office Memorandum, 21 Nov., 1911; WO 106/47A&B. The Home Office memorandum, written by Churchill, who was Home Secretary at that time, expressed concern about defending Paris against a German attack. The War Office answered, ". . . it may be taken as an axiom that the Germans will not detach any large forces for the purpose of investing Paris or other fortresses until a decision has been reached with the French field army." Churchill's memorandum is published in World Crisis, Vol. I, pp. 60-64.

⁸C.R.M.F. Cruttwell, A History of the Great War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), pp. 93-113.

⁹Viscount French of Ypres, 1914 (London: Constable, 1919), pp. 144-145. On the conviction of French and Kitchener that there was a stalemate in the West, see Page's record of a conversation with French on 15 Jan., 1915, No. 1474; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915, Supplement (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1928), p. 5. This telegram also refers to a conversation between Kitchener and the American military attache.

¹⁰Churchill, Vol. III. pp. 43-44.

¹¹Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49703. See also St. John Brodrick to Balfour, 13 Jan., 1915; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49721: "It was difficult to avoid forming pretty strong opinions as to the chances of getting forward in France after seeing and hearing so many of the generals there."

¹²Grey, Vol. II, p. 160.

¹³Esher to Balfour, 25 Jan., 1915; Balfour Paper, B.M. Add. Mss. 49719.

¹⁴French, p. 351.

¹⁵Cruttwell, pp. 147-161.

¹⁶Asquith to The King, 3 July, 1915; Cab 37/131/3. See also Guinn, p. 89.

¹⁷Asquith to The King, 20 Aug., 1915; Cab 37/144/4.

¹⁸Churchill, Vol. III pp. 46,47.

¹⁹Haig Papers, p. 104

²⁰Balfour to Haldane, 4 Aug., 1914: Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49724.

²¹French, pp. 266,267.

²²Balfour to Major Fitzgerald, 27 Nov., 1914; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49863.

²³French, p. 335.

²⁴French, pp. 340-341.

²⁵Churchill, Vol. III, p. 236. Grey, Vol. II, p. 160, speaks of "the deplorable impression made by the huge Russian disasters."

²⁶On Kitchener's attitude towards the early failures, note Kitchener to General Sir Ian Hamilton, 18 May, 1915, No. 4726, cipher; WO 33/732/894: "I am quite certain that you fully realize what a serious disappointment it has been to me to discover that my preconceived views as to the conquest of positions necessary to dominate the forts on the Straits, with naval artillery to support our troops on the land, and with the active help of naval bombardment, were miscalculated." A more public admission of extreme disappointment was made by Asquith in the Commons on 2 November, 1915: " . . . in the whole course of the war, with its ups and downs, I have never sustained a keener disappointment than in the failure of this operation. The chances of success, as it seemed to us and to those on the spot, were not only great but preponderant, while the consequences of success, if success had been attained, were almost immeasurable. (Hear, hear.) It would have solved the whole situation in the Balkans. It would have prevented the possibility of that which unhappily now is the realized fact; the admission of Bulgaria to our opponents. It would have laid the capital of the Turkish Empire open to menace and possibly to capture, and throughout the whole of the Eastern world it would have been acclaimed as the most brilliant and conclusive demonstration of the superiority of the Allies." Speeches, pp. 235-236.

²⁷C.J. Lowe, "Britain and Italian Intervention, 1914-1915", pp. 540-541. Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 430.

²⁸French, pp. 315-316

²⁹Callwell to Adm. H.F. Oliver, 11 Oct., 1915; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49715.

³⁰On British diplomacy in the Balkans, see C.J. Lowe, "The Failure of British Diplomacy in the Balkan, 1914-1916".

³¹For example, see Selborne to Kitchener, 2 Dec., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/80: "Constantinople is the prize for which every patriotic Russian is fighting today as Russia's one reward for her gigantic sacrifices. Take all prospects of that reward away and what remains for Russia to fight for." See also Selborne to Balfour, 27 Nov., 1914; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49708.

³²For example, Kitchener's telegram to Hamilton on 18 May, 1915 (see Note 26 above) expressed his concern about the dangers in the East if the British should have to withdraw from the Dardanelles operation. On 2 December, 1915, he was reminded of this danger by Lord Curzon, ". . . do you think we can continue to hold our Empire in the East," Curzon asked, "with (a) evacuation of Salonica -- or as an alternative military disaster there (b) evacuation of 2/3 of Gallipoli (c) fatal retreat from Baghdad (d) greatly augmented menace to Egypt?" Kitchener Papers. PRO 30/57/80.

³³Grey, Vol. II, p. 214.

³⁴Asquith, Speeches, pp. 204-212.

³⁵Page to House, 22 Sept., 1914; Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 331.

³⁶Lord Beaverbrook, Politicians and the War (London: Cox & Wyman, 1968) p. 71. Hazlehurst, pp. 121, 171-179.

³⁷Lady Cynthia Asquith, Diaries, p. 11.

³⁸Selborne to Kitchener, 21 Sept., 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/80.

³⁹Beaverbrook, p. 239.

⁴⁰Hazlehurst, pp. 71, 72.

⁴¹Beaverbrook, p. 237.

⁴²Earl of Midleton, Records and Reactions, 1856-1939 (London: Murray, 1939), p. 219. About 20 August, 1914, Kitchener asked Midleton how many men he thought should

be raised. Middleton first asked where Kitchener thought the Russians would be in November, and when Kitchener pointed to a spot about 70 miles from Berlin, Middleton said a million men would be enough, for the war could hardly last a year in that case. "Nonsense," Kitchener answered. "It will last three years." See also Hendrick, p. 331.

⁴³Kitchener, Memorandum on Manpower for the Army, 12 Oct., 1915; Cab 37/135/26.

⁴⁴J. Masterton Smith, Pencil notes on conversation between Balfour and Kitchener, 21 Jan., 1916; Balfour Papers B.M. Add. Mss. 49726.

⁴⁵Minutes of meeting of the War Committee, 28 Dec., 1915; Cab 42/6/14. See also Guinn, p. 126.

⁴⁶Balfour, "Efficiency in War and Compulsion", 19 Aug., 1915; Cab 37/134/25. The quotation on the conscription decision is from Lady Cynthia Asquith, p. 117; the date of the entry is 29 Dec., 1915.

⁴⁷Amery, Vol. II, p. 82.

⁴⁸These terms of reference are referred to in A.H. Henderson, Memorandum on manpower and conscription, 7 Sept., 1915; Cab 37/134/5.

⁴⁹R.S. Churchill, Lord Derby (London: Heinemann, 1959), p. 192.

⁵⁰Kitchener to Asquith, 11 Jan., 1916; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/76.

⁵¹Selborne, Memorandum on the financial situation, 15 Sept., 1915; Cab 37/134/21.

⁵²For a critical description of the "blind faith" school see Amery, Vol. II, p. 66-68

⁵³Robertson, Soldiers and Statesmen, Vol. I, p. 239. (London: Cassell, 1926,) p.. 239.

⁵⁴Robertson to Haig, 13 Mar., 1916; Haig Papers, p. 124.

⁵⁵Quoted in Haig, "Memorandum on Operations on the Western Front, 1916-1918", Haig Papers, p. 365.

⁵⁶For Grey and McKenna, see above, p. 108. Grey's concern for a decisive victory in the West in 1916 is also seen in a memorandum on military strategy which he wrote on 14 January, 1916. (Cab 42/7/8). The only chance of victory, he thought, was "to hammer the Germans hard in the first eight months of this year." A paper by Chamberlain had supported this view. "Military Policy. Note by Mr. Chamberlain", 17 Jan., 1916; Cab 42/7/8. Lloyd George's dependence for policy on Robertson and Haig is illustrated in Soldiers and Statesmen, Vol. I, p. 271.

⁵⁷Haig Papers, p. 366

⁵⁸Balfour to Kitchener, 10 June, 1915; Kitchener Papers, PRO 30/57/78. See also Guinn, p. 135 n, on the attrition idea in the strategy for 1916.

⁵⁹Haig diary, 2 July, 1916; Robertson to Haig, 29 July, 1916; Haig to Robertson, 1 Aug., 1916; Haig Papers, pp. 154, 157, 158. See also Churchill, Vol. III, p. 47: Cruttwell, p. 268.

⁶⁰Churchill, Vol. III, p. 186. Haig recorded in his diary on 8 Aug., 1916, that the King spoke at length to Haig about the paper Churchill had written, "criticizing the operations in France, and arriving at the conclusion that nothing had been achieved."

⁶¹Haig to Robertson, 1 Aug., 1916; Haig Papers, pp. 157, 158.

⁶²Robertson to Haig, 5, 8 Aug., 1916; ibid., pp. 158, 159.

⁶³House diary, 15 May, 1916; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, p. 255.

⁶⁴Haig Papers, p. 151.

⁶⁵Page, Notes on conversation with Sir Edward Grey, 27 July, 1916; enclosure with Page to Wilson, 21 Sept., 1916; Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 183.

⁶⁶Buchanan to Grey, 3 Aug., 1916, No. 1239; FO 371/2750/149150.

⁶⁷Foreign Office to Board of Trade, 8 Aug., 1916; quoted in C.I.D., "First Interim Report". This letter formed part of the terms of reference of the sub-committee on territorial changes. A Foreign Office memorandum on British war aims, signed by Tyrrell and Paget and dated 7 Aug., 1916, also approached the question of war aims on two separate assumptions, victory and stalemate. Lloyd George, The Truth about the Peace Treaties (London: Gollancz, 1938), Vol. I,

⁶⁸Amery, pp. 102,103.

⁶⁹Robertson to Lloyd George, 17 Aug., 1916; WO 106/1510.

⁷⁰Edwin Montagu, "The Problems of Peace", 29 Aug., 1916; Cab 42/18/7.

⁷¹Extracts from the proceedings of a meeting of the War Committee, 30 Aug., 1916; Cab 37/154/33.

⁷²Robertson, "General Staff Memorandum submitted in accordance with the Prime Minister's Instructions." Cab 42/18/10. Lord Crawford, "Conditions of an Armistice." 17 Sept., 1916; Cab 42/20/2. Balfour, "The Peace Settlement in Europe", adm. 4 Oct., 1916; Cab 37/157/7. H.B. Jackson "Note on the Possible Terms of Peace", 12 Oct., 1916; Cab 42/21/8.

⁷³Cruttwell, pp. 273-277.

⁷⁴"Addendum to General Staff Memorandum of 31st August, 1916", 28 Mar., 1917; WO 106/1511.

⁷⁵Admiral Hall to Balfour, 7 Oct., 1917; Balfour Papers, FO 800/214.

⁷⁶Haig Papers, p. 173.

⁷⁷Nicolson to Hardinge, 26 Jan., 1916; Nicolson Papers, FO 800/381.

⁷⁸Haig to Balfour, 24 Oct., 1916; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49726. The enclosed note, dated 23 Oct., 1916, is entitled, "Fluctuations in German Strength during 1916" and is signed by J. Charteris of Haig's

staff. Haig, it seems, made this statement to argue against the accusation that in spite of the Somme offensive, Germany was withdrawing troops from the West to send to the East. But in so doing he still left himself open to the accusation that the offensive was not fulfilling its purpose of wearing down the German forces. The number of German divisions had, in fact, increased in the West by 7 1/2 between 1 July and 24 October. But apparently this was not at the expense of the East: there the number of divisions had increased by 18 1/2. In a lengthy memorandum of 26 October Robertson argued that the number of divisions was not an accurate gauge of enemy strength and, apparently to support Haig's point that the Germans were not sending troops from the West to the East he pointed out that "the greater majority of these New divisions have been formed by reducing the strength of existing divisions." The distribution of battalions, he felt, gave a fairer comparison of strengths on the two fronts. Between 1 July and 24 October the number of battalions had decreased by 35 in the West and had increased by 182 in the East. But these figures nevertheless showed an overall increase in the number of battalions, as well as the fact that the German High Command was more concerned with increasing strength on the Eastern front, despite the Allied offensive in the West. As regards manpower, Robertson stated that in the previous three months Germany had increased her effectives by 300,000 men. As she still had from 1 1/2 to 2 million men available for military service "it is clear that she is in a position to continue the war for a period the duration of which cannot be estimated." Robertson's paper was thus not a good vindication of Haig's confidence in the effectiveness of the operations in the West.

⁷⁹ Johnstone (The Hague) to Hardinge, 7 Nov., 1916; Cab 37/159/15. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, Old Diplomacy (London: Murray, 1947), p.203. See also Joseph Davies The Prime Minister's Secretariat, 1916-1920 (Newport: Johns, 1951), p. 193; Guinn, P. 172; War Memoirs, Vol. II pp. 965-974, 1017. For War Committee discussion of the submarine menace and counter measures, see the minutes of the War Committee meeting of 2 Nov., 1916; Cab 37/159/7.

⁸⁰ Grey to Balfour (undated); Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49731. See also B.E.C. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour (London: Hutchinson, 1936), p. 163. The note, according to Dugdale, was "almost certainly written in November, 1916."

⁸¹ Spring Rice to Grey, 1 Dec., 1916; Cab 37/161/3. See also Intimate Papers, Vol. II, pp. 322-328, particularly with regard to the dissension over the U-53 incident.

⁸²Lansdowne, Memorandum on terms of peace, 13 Nov., 1916; Cab 37/159/32.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Grey to Barclay, 14 Nov., 1916; Cab 37/159/34.

⁸⁵Grey, Memorandum on the war situation, 27 Nov., 1916; Cab 27/160/20.

⁸⁶Robertson, "Appreciation of the war situation", 24 Nov., 1916; Cab 37/106/15. Soldiers and Statesmen, Vol. I p. 280, Haig Papers, p. 182.

⁸⁷See minutes of War Committee meetings of 24, 27 Nov., 1916; Cab 42/25/810.

⁸⁸The quotation is from Balfour to the Duke of Devonshire (Ottawa), 8 Dec., 1916; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49697. "I am quite certain the change had to be made," Balfour also wrote, "and, but for the Northcliffe Press, I think we might have been able to arrange for a reform of the War Committee while keeping Asquith as Prime Minister, and preserving the Coalition."

⁸⁹Beaverbrook, pp. 408-409.

⁹⁰War Memoirs, Vol II, pp. 853-855.

⁹¹Ibid., Vol. II, p. 283, See also Grey, Vol. II, pp. 127-130, for the memorandum he prepared for the Cabinet on the House peace plan shortly before he left office. This shows clearly how American mediation, in his view, was to be held in reserve; otherwise, the defeat of Germany "is, and will continue to be, the only satisfactory end of the war."

⁹²Grey, Memorandum for the Cabinet, 18 Oct., 1916; Cab 37/157/39.

⁹³Hankey, Vol. II, p. 557. Hankey had just told Lloyd George "that personally I never had the smallest illusions about crushing Germany. The best I had ever hoped for at any time was a draw in our favour, and a favourable peace extorted by economic pressure." In a memorandum of June, 1916, Lloyd George had written, "We are undoubtedly losing the war, and nothing can save us but the nation itself." War Memoirs, Vol. II, p. 766.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 279.

⁹⁵On Lloyd George's view that British salvation would come through "the people", see also his of 15 Nov., 1916; War Memoirs, Vol. II, p. 337.

⁹⁶Beaverbrook, pp. 509-512.

⁹⁷Robertson, "Addendum", 28 Mar., 1917; Minutes of the Imperial War Conference, April, 1917 CO 532/97.

⁹⁸For Balfour's views, see his memorandum, "The Peace Settlement in Europe", 4 Oct., 1916; Cab 37/157/7. There he argued that Germany was likely to remain the enemy at the end of the war and that peace would be maintained by the co-operation of England and France.

⁹⁹Grey to Roosevelt, 13 Mar., 1915; Grey, Vol. II, pp. 149-151.

¹⁰⁰C.I.D., "Second Interim Report".

¹⁰¹"Note on Our Future Military Policy."

¹⁰²"The Problem of the Near East", 20 June, 1916.

¹⁰³Louis Mallet to Sir Eric Drummond, ?27 (not legible) Dec., 1916; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49748.

¹⁰⁴Grey to Spring Rice, 26 Nov., 1916; Trevelyan, p. 324.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 325.

¹⁰⁶W.C. 4, 13 Dec, 1916; Cab 37/161/19. For a detailed study of British policy with regard to the German and American peace notes, see Sterling Kernek, "The British Government's Reactions to President Wilson's 'Peace' Note of December 1916", Historical Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (1970), pp. 721-766. On American and German policy on the peace question leading up to these notes, see E.C. Brunauer, "The Peace Proposals of December, 1916 - January, 1917", Journal of Modern History, Vol. LV, No. 4 (Dec., 1932), pp. 545-571.

¹⁰⁷R. Cecil, "Note on the German Offer of Peace". presented to W.C. 10, 18 Dec., 1916; Cab 37/161/38. See also Hankey, Vol. II, pp. 599,600 and Hardinge, p. 206. Hardinge wrote subsequently that the German proposal was "a clear indication of consciousness of failing strength."

¹⁰⁸House of Commons Debates, Vol. 88, col. 1334. Both the King and the Embassy in Washington attempted to get Lloyd George to delay his answer until some information on German terms was obtained. Haig Papers, p. 187; Intimate Papers, Vol. II, P. 401. On the French statement, note Bertie to Balfour, 14 Dec., 1916, No. 527; FO 371/240881/16. Bertie observed, "The vital part of Monsieur Briand's declaration . . . and the one which largely contributed to give him the majority he subsequently obtained, was that in which he dealt in eloquent and scathing terms with the German peace manoeuvre."

¹⁰⁹The Allies' Reply to the German Peace Note of December 12th, December 30, 1916; G. Lowes Dickinson, Documents and Statements relating to Peace Proposals and War Aims, December, 1916 - November, 1918 (London: 1919), pp. 7-10. On the question of German terms of negotiation at this time, note Rumbold (Berne) to Balfour, 13 Feb., 1917, No. 115; FO 371/576. When the American Ambassador at Berlin was passing through Switzerland after the severing of American-German diplomatic relations, he had an interview with Rumbold, who asked him about indications of peace terms which the Germans were prepared to agree to at the time of their Peace Note, Gerard gave the following points:

1. Evacuation of Belgium under guarantees:
 - a. control of Belgian ports, forts, and railways:
 - b. industrial control over the country.
2. Retention of portion of Northern France under disguise of rectification of frontier.
3. Establishment of Russian Poland as an independent Kingdom after slice had been added to the German Empire.
4. Reconstruction of Serbian Kingdom after Bulgaria had slice of that territory.
5. Return of all German colonies.
6. Return of all German ships.
7. Indemnity from Powers of the Entente.

¹¹⁰Lowes Dickinson, p. 9.

¹¹¹See above, pp. 33,107,108.

¹¹²Balfour to Sanderson, 14 Jan., 1917; Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. Mss. 49739. See also Dugdale, p. 189.

¹¹³The Allies reply to President Wilson's Note of December 18th, January 10. 1916: Lowes Dickinson, pp. 10-13.

¹¹⁴President Wilson's Note of December 18th; ibid., pp. 4-6

¹¹⁵Mr. Balfour's Dispatch Commenting on the Allied Note of December 30, 1916, Addressed to the British Ambassador at Washington, January 16, 1917; ibid.

¹¹⁶Hendrick, Vol. II, pp. 2,3.

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